

IMPROVEMENT ERA.

Organ of Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations.

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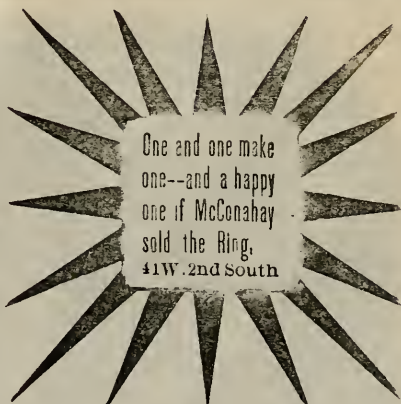
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INVITATION

To Subscribe for

The Improvement Era.

Organ of Young Men's Mutual
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Volume VII.

1903-1904.

On November 1st, 1903, the IMPROVEMENT ERA makes its seventh annual bow before the public. A little older, but also stronger—stronger in the love of the people. We have kept up the high water mark of circulation reached in Volume V, and have added hundreds of new readers. All who have spoken, have a good word for our magazine.

How the Era is Owned and Controlled.

The ERA is the organ of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations of the Church. It is owned by the subscribers, and has no capital save the subscriptions annually invested by its loyal readers, who comprise the cream of the youth and men of the Church. While it was started by the young men as their advocate, it is a magazine that would find favor with the general reader who de-

lights in clean, entertaining, and instructive literature. Its pages contain history, comment on current events, biography, doctrinal and inspirational essays, poems, and stories by the best and ablest home writers. President Joseph F. Smith is the editor, and he with the General Board of the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations controls its policy. All the profits go to the betterment of the magazine, or are spent in the interest of the Church or the Improvement Associations. The magazine is not published for the purpose of making money. Your attention is called to the double purpose served by every subscription: it is a contribution aiding in the growth and prosperity of the Church and in the advancement of good works among the young people; it gives you, besides, full returns for \$2.00 invested, in good, wholesome, entertaining literature.

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And so on we might continue indefinitely with many testimonials that we have on hand as to the value of the ERA among the missionaries. You can well afford \$2.00 to help in this work, especially as you get full value for your money in the magazine itself. What do you say? Send your subscription today. Don't wait for further solicitation.

The Manual Goes Free with the Era.

An additional consideration is that you get the Manual—either Senior or Junior—free with each subscription. That is a great consideration, for the Senior Manual this year is a book of 200 pages of fine type which, under other conditions, would cost you \$1.00. You get this book free with the ERA. It is sold to members for 25 cents and to others than members of our Associations for 50 cents. You get it free as a subscriber for the ERA. A few words about the Manual, for you will surely want it. It is a valuable treatise on the Book of Mormon by B. H. Roberts. It is divided into four parts:

Part I. The Value of the Book of Mormon as a Witness for the Authenticity and Integrity of the Bible and the Truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Part II. The Discovery of the Book of Mormon and Its Translation; the Migrations, Lands, Inter-continental Movements, Civilization, Government and Religion of its People.

Part III. Evidence of the Truth of the Book of Mormon.

Part IV. Objections to the Book of Mormon.

Parts I and II are used as the body of the manual for 1903-1904; Parts III and IV will be used for the manual for 1904-1905. There is this difference between these two manuals and those already issued, that whereas the analysis of each lesson has been given and immediately followed with notes which gave the general information on the text, in the present manual, the analysis of all the lessons will be placed together, and the references made to the body of the Manual which treats of the subject. It is found that the treatise of Elder Roberts will comprise nearly all the material that the student will require to inform him on the subject of the lesson, and though, of course, copious references will be made to the works of other writers, yet the manuals upon the subject of the Book of Mormon will be practically all the reference works that the students will require in mastering the subjects of the several lessons. It is presented to the young men at a very low price. Ordinarily it would cost \$1.50, which is the price of the same writer's work, "A New Witness for God," but in these Manuals, members of our associations will get the work for 50 cents, each manual costing 25 cents, and subscribers for the ERA get it free; others, not members or subscribers, must pay 50 cents.

The Junior Manual, which should be in the hands of every member and student of the Bible in our Junior Classes, remains at the price of 25 cents, or is obtained free with the ERA. The subject is "The Ancient Prophets," and it consists of a

number of character sketches taken from the Bible and Book of Mormon, considered in their chronological order. The lessons will be presented in a simple story form, arranged with subdivisions, so that assignments may be made to several members. Each lesson will emphasize some important principle taught in the life of the character treated, and will be followed by a series of questions.

Regular Departments and Contributors.

The "Editor's Table," so valuable to our readers in the past, will continue to be one of the leading features of the ERA, in which President Joseph F. Smith will discuss ethical, religious, and current topics. A large number of letters which have been received by the editors speak of the value of "The Current Story of the World," which has appeared for the past two years in our magazine, written by Dr. J. M. Tanner, and this popular department will be continued and improved in Volume VII. The department, "Questions and Answers," will contain important questions, and "Our Work" will be made even more valuable, necessary and indispensable as a guide and help to the officers than heretofore. Among the writers who have promised to contribute to Volume VII of the ERA are the following well known and leading professors, authors, teachers and citizens of Utah and surrounding states:

B. H. ROBERTS
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ANDREW JENSON
BEN E. RICH
AND MANY OTHERS.

Special Features of Volume VII.

"Joseph Smith as Scientist," by Dr. John A. Widtsoe.

Dr. John A. Widtsoe, whose splendid contributions to the ERA heretofore have received such widespread admiration, has prepared a series of eight papers on the subject "Joseph Smith as Scientist," which are now in hand, and will appear in Volume VII. This series alone will be worth much more than the subscription price.

President Joseph F. Smith, the Senior Editor.

Will contribute articles monthly touching topics of interest to the Saints and the young people. No series of articles that have ever been published in a home magazine have received greater favor than the contributions of President Smith in the past volumes of our magazine, and subscribers will have a feast of good things in his writings for Volume VII.

Twelve Talks to Young Men on as Many Topics.

In Volume VI there appeared twelve articles by a number of writers on the above subject, and from the letters and inquiries that have come to the editors, it is clear that these articles have been received with much favor. We have therefore concluded to continue "Talks to Young Men" in Volume VII. No pains will be spared to make these heart to heart talks with the boys practical, useful, inspiring and to the point, on such subjects as: "Character Building," "Life as a Fine Art," "The True Gentleman," "Honor," "Punctuality," "Dress," "Money Matters of Young Men," "Business Integrity," "Method and Economy," "Seizing Opportunity," "Prudence," "Dispatch," "Luck or Pluck?" "Counsels of Successful Men," "Philosophy of Common Sense," "A Happy Successful Life," "Commercial Value of Thought," "Food and Exercise," and other practical topics.

Stories.

As in Volume VI, we design presenting to our readers in the present Volume, VII, a number of clean, lively stories of life, love and adventure that will interest the reader who is fond of fiction. The ERA aims to print such stories as will cultivate a superior taste for good reading, and for first class light literature.

Miscellaneous Subjects Already in Hand.

A host of essays on religious, historical, social, literary, and scientific themes will appear, written by a variety of entertaining authors, old and new. Among

the titles, now on hand or promised, which will appear at an early date, are the following:

"What Does Science Say?" "The Red House on Lime Street." "Was the Declaration of Independence a Divine Inspiration?" "The Parables of Jesus." "The Ancient Hebrew View of the World and its Creation." "God's Revelation of His Character in the History of Israel, as a Preparation for the Establishment of the Gospel." "The Relation of Natural Science to Agriculture," several articles. "A Patriarchal Blessing and Its Realization." "Indian Customs and Traditions." "Immortality of the Spirit." "The Tryst—A True Tale." "The Triune Forces of Missionary Life." "The Ologies." "Progress of the Saints in Canada." "The Wayside Burial." "Chips from the Block." "The Industrial Problem." "Agriculture as a Profession." "The Scripture as the Inspirer of Youth and Refiner of Character." "Nature's Remedies." "The Law of Affinity: Its Operation and Results."

Special Doctrinal Subjects.

Elder B. H. Roberts, one of the leading writers of the Church, will contribute several striking articles on doctrinal subjects, and one in particular on the "Probability of Joseph Smith's Story Concerning the Book of Mormon." As the subject of the Book of Mormon will be uppermost in our Associations for the coming season, this will be a very important contribution, and will be followed by others on Book of Mormon subjects that will be of great interest to the young men. There should be a combined effort on the part of the officers of the Mutual Improvement Associations to hold up before the young people the divinity and truthfulness of the Book of Mormon during the coming year. In fact, our motto or aim for the coming season should be, "WE WILL LEARN TO KNOW AND PROVE THAT THE BOOK OF MORMON IS TRUE." The articles that will appear in the ERA will supplement the efforts of the associations, and greatly aid the young men in obtaining this knowledge and testimony, and in developing the aim which should be foremost before the associations. Other doctrinal topics will receive due consideration, and our efforts will be extended to make the ERA a leading doctrinal exponent of the Church for the missionary field, for the student, and the investigator.

Aim of the Era.

The primary aim of the ERA is to instil into the hearts of the young people a testimony of the truth and magnitude of the Gospel and the work of God; and, like the associations which it represents, "to aid them in developing the gifts within them, and in cultivating a knowledge and an application of the eternal principles of the great science of life." It aims, besides, to educate and interest its readers in social affairs, in history, biography, current events, and the building of noble character, and points young men to the way of true success. As the organ of the

Young Men's Mutual Improvement Associations it promulgates the official instructions of the leaders of this great organization, making it indispensable to every officer therein. It is a magazine for the family.

Special to the Officers of the Mutual Improvement Associations.

We ask you to continue loyal to our magazine, by subscribing for it yourselves, and by each one of you securing one other subscriber. That would give us nearly 7,000 subscribers, from this source alone. Remember that every president is an agent. It is suggested that he should appoint one of his assistants to look carefully after the interests of the magazine, and see that his ward is thoroughly and completely canvassed early in the season. A stake aid to the superintendent should be appointed to supervise the canvass for the ERA and otherwise look after its welfare in the stake. There is no difficulty in obtaining subscribers if the work is handled properly and in season, and we solicit our officers to loyally take hold of this matter, and in this way aid the work of obtaining a large circulation. As the organ of our associations it is the vehicle of official information for the officers, and as such is indispensable to M. I. A. workers.

Terms and Guarantee.

At the last annual conference of the associations, the officers decided to return to first principles in handling the business of the magazine—that is, that all pay shall be in advance. The ERA will be issued promptly on the first of each month, and will be sent only to subscribers who pay in advance. We do a cash business. The price of the magazine is \$2.00, including the manual, strictly in advance; the only exception to this being that, on application from subscribers who have been with us for years, the magazine will be sent to them without interruption upon receipt of a request from them, (on the subscription slips forwarded them by mail) to continue the magazine upon their promise to pay within the month. We have behind us six years of fulfilled promises. The magazine is prompt in publication and all our pledges will be faithfully kept, as they have been in the past.

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IMPROVEMENT ERA.

VOL. VI.

OCTOBER, 1903.

No. 12.

THE TWO ASPECTS OF DEITY CONTRASTED.*

BY PROF. N. L. NELSON, OF THE BRIGHAM YOUNG ACADEMY.

In the preceding chapter, I have assumed, partly on the authority of scripture, and partly from the necessity involved in a living, virile faith, that the personal or Christtype of God is true, and the Buddhistic or universal-spirit type is false.

The proposition, however, is of such vital importance—reaching as it does into every thought and act of our lives—that it should not rest upon these good foundations, if better can be established. Accordingly, I shall, in this chapter and the next, attempt a series of parallels between the two conceptions in their relation to life itself.

One preliminary, however, needs to be taken into account on the start. Science insists that truth can be known to man only by experience; and that, consequently, the basis for the credibility of any reasoning, speculative or otherwise, must be that its premises are realities. In this discussion, I shall insist strongly upon the law of experience being kept in view. A little reflection must

* Being chapters IV and V of a new book Professor Nelson is writing, entitled, *Science and Mormonism*.

show how valueless is any system, however logical, that is not formed on this law.

Buddha, for instance, retires into the darkness of a cave to escape the "tyranny of his senses"—in other words, to escape the truths of experience. There, untrammelled by the necessity of conforming to objective law, his mind weaves a beautiful and most perfect system of soul-evolution, which, because of its unexampled logical unity, he soon comes to believe is real, and, in due time, that it is the only reality.

All this is marvelous enough; but what shall we say to the marvel of millions of people, in every age since then, disavowing all experience as mere shadows, and accepting this dream as the criterion of life? Suppose the first timepiece had been evolved in the same way, should we have apotheosized the watch-maker, and thereafter treated the movements of sun, moon, and stars as base illusions!

To make a beginning, then—at the beginning—let us contemplate the largest truth of which the human mind is capable; a truth, moreover, concerning which all minds must agree; viz., the formlessness, the reality, the unity, the homogeneity, the integrity, the harmony, the infinitude, both in time and space, and, withal, the mystery, of the uncreated universe. We need not reason, indeed we cannot reason, to these aspects of the All-in-all. We have only to open our souls, and they pour in to the extent of our capacity. Nor can we reason these intuitions out of ourselves. Insanity might temporarily obscure them, but soul-atrophy alone could deprive us of them.*

Other aspects, though dependent upon perception and inference, are almost self-evident. One of these is the fact that the universe is not empty, but full. Full of what? Ah, there we come face to face with the Mystery. We call it ether—quite as if that signified something. Let us rather say, full of power—static, quiescent—a dark, silent ocean of energy, out of which

* Let me ask the reader to realize as far as possible the thought involved in this paragraph, by re-reading and bringing to each word the test of introspection; that is, referring it to his own intuitions, thereby forming some definite judgment of its truth.

forces rise, and into which they sink, after they have played their transitory parts before the mimic stage of our senses; say, rather, that the universe is full of the mother essence of creation, out of which Invention has formed worlds without number, and the resources of which Invention shall never exhaust.

It is precisely at this point—the point at which the uncreated becomes the created—that the problem of religion begins; how and by what agency the “formed” and “limited” comes out of the womb of the “formless” and “limitless.” This is a question that immediately begins to divide mankind; and to this question, therefore, let us first address our attention.

In Salt Lake City is a beautiful temple of gray granite, and in one of the canyons to the east is the quarry whence its massive walls were drawn. Consider, then, these two objects: the gray-granite mountain in the clouds, the gray-granite temple in the valley. What is the relationship between them? Did the mountain brood and bring into being the temple? If not, was there an “All-soul” deep in the bosom of the ancient Wasatch range that conceived this magnificent piece of architecture, then shaped the rugged cliffs into geometrical blocks and laid them one upon another? Or, if not the soul of the mountain or the soul of the range, perhaps it was the soul of the earth, or of the solar system; or did the universe itself bring about this substantial piece of creation?

If these questions seem palpably absurd, the reader is kindly requested to exercise patience till the analogy is completed.

Science practically agrees with scripture that there was a time when the space now occupied by the solar system—a very lonely part of the universe, so astronomers tell us—was “without form and void,” that is to say, it exhibited all the formlessness, quiescence, and homogeneity of the rest of the uncreated universe.

Why did it not continue so forever? Who or what caused the change? What is the relationship between that first state and the present? Did the “All-soul” residing within this sphere of pregnant space—the sphere bounded by Neptune—conceive the sun and his satellites, then bring them blazing forth in the dark abyss? Or was the moving cause of this transcendent marvel the

"All-soul" of the million-fold greater sphere, whose radius sweeps the nearest fixed star? Or did the creative act spring out of the universe itself?

The solar system could not have come about without a cause. To call that cause God, brings us not a single step nearer the solution of the problem; save perhaps that it narrows the question to, What is God?

Of all the conceptions that have at various ages held the attention of mankind, only two survive the enlightenment of the present century—the Buddhistic conception and the Biblical. According to the first, God, if not the universe, is at least co-extensive with the universe; an essence permeating every infinitesimal portion of boundless space; a spirit, dormant or quiescent in the uncreated universe, but active and dynamic—the animating principle in the created universe; the noumenon, or only reality, out of which phenomena—that is to say, illusions—arise, and back into which they must inevitably melt or sink; the boundless and eternal uncaused cause of all things.

In so far as a rational conception of God can be gathered from the very irrational definitions given in numerous confessions of faith, this is also practically the conception of modern Christianity,* save that its advocates, while they derive all created things—phenomena—from the uncreated universe (or God), have, nevertheless, not the courage of the Buddhists to carry their

* Here is the conception set forth in the Nicene creed, a conception followed, with modifications, by most sects of Christendom: "We worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity; neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is all one; the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible"—to which we may fairly add, and this definition incomprehensible; for how can God be "formed" and "limited" (i.e., as three separate persons,) and at the same time "formless" and "limitless" (i.e., as uncreate)? It is stultification of this kind that has brought religion into contempt with thinking minds.

premises to the inexorable conclusion; viz., that these phenomena, these semi-illusions exhibited to our senses by form and limitation, must inevitably go back—melt, sink again—into the uncreated universe; in other words, that Creation must be followed by Nirvana.

Various and fantastic have been the attempts at conveying an idea of the Christian God, as set forth in the Nicene creed. The Church of England is, perhaps, clearest in its announcement of his immateriality, declaring him to be “without body, parts, or passions, and of infinite power and wisdom;” then, very illogically, announcing that in the “unity of this Godhead there be three persons!”—also quite ignoring the distinction between the limited and the limitless.

From current religious discussions may be gathered the notion that he is a being whose circumference is everywhere and whose center is nowhere; who sits on the top of a topless throne beyond the bounds of time and space. But as there is neither center nor circumference to that which is boundless, nor top to that which is topless, and no beyond to time and space, such explanations are beneath the dignity of ministers of the gospel.

Although this conception of God as an immaterial, omnipresent Spirit is prevalent among modern Christian churches, it is by no means traceable to the teachings of Christ. On the contrary, it represents two distinct compromises of the religion of Christ with secular cosmogonies. The first was with the philosophy of Greece, as represented by Athanasius and the school of Greek dialecticians who joined the church during the third and fourth centuries. By the creed of Nice (already quoted) God is called a person, which of course represents the Bible side of the controversy. But in the next breath, he is pronounced uncreate, which makes him without form, the definition thereby violating the second law of thought; viz., a thing cannot be and not be at the same time. True, by the powerful writings of St. Augustine, the personal aspect was kept in the ascendancy down until the eighteenth century. Unfortunately, Augustine associated with the Bible conception such human limitations of Deity—including the doctrine of the total depravity of man—that his ideas became untenable before the onslaught of evolutionary

philosophy; and when they fell, the idea of a personal God fell with them.

The second compromise—which was all but a complete surrender—was to modern science; for to the extent that science is not agnostic—that is to say, in so far as it applies the name of God to any of its concepts—it, too, accepts as most rational the Buddhistic idea; that of the immanent God, the indwelling Spirit of Life. For, does not this idea admirably explain the vivifying principle in nature, the source and meaning—to borrow Spencer's phrase—of that "infinite and eternal energy whence all things proceed"? Does it not also explain the unity and harmony so manifest in the universe?

Another rapidly growing cult—which might be roughly classed as transcendental, keeping in mind both the good and bad sense of the word, a cult in whose front ranks stand such rational thinkers as Emerson and Carlyle, but whose wings and vanguards are marshaled into line by such dreamers as Madam Blavatsky and Mrs. Mary Baker Glover Eddy—also accept as the basis of their various philosophies this same background of things knowable, the Buddhistic conception of Deity. So that this doctrine of pantheism—for such it is, more or less modified—holds all but universal sway among civilized peoples at the present time.

In view of this fact, it would seem to argue unusual temerity for a handful of people like the "Mormons" to rise up and proclaim the old-fashioned conception of God as a glorified, perfected, personal Being, the Father of the human race, and its prototype in every sense—physically, intellectually, socially, morally, and spiritually. To be sure, such is the revelation of him in the Bible. As before pointed out, from the first page in Genesis, where man is represented as being made in his image, to the last page of Revelation, where he is represented as seated on the great white throne—in almost every chapter of Holy Writ, we get the conception of a personal God.

Nor do "Mormons" alone get this idea from scripture: all men do who have no esoteric meanings to read into the sacred text. But not all men can withstand the bombardment of speculative philosophy. Let a college professor explain, with his fine air of superiority, that only in a crude age of the world's history did

mankind hold so narrow and degraded a conception of Deity, and these honest but entirely exoteric readers of scripture blush for their ignorance, and straightway go over to the popular side.

Only the sturdy convictions of a "Mormon" can withstand the contempt hurled in the word "anthromorphism," and similar philosophic brick-bats. "Fancy God using his legs!" exclaimed an elegant preacher of righteousness. Well, my fine bird, fancy the Redeemer of mankind not doing so! And yet Jesus is pronounced by Paul to be the "brightness of his Father's glory, the express image of his person." It is not least of the evils of this Buddhist philosophy, that the mental palate becomes so finical as to reject merely natural phenomena as coarse and contemptible.

It is not my purpose, however, to contend that the "Mormon" conception is that of the revelations of scripture. This will probably be conceded. The vital question here is, How does this conception work out in the revelations of nature?

In passing, I may merely mention the old philosophic difficulties connected with the non-"Mormon" or pantheistic conception; viz., that if God is immanent, that is to say, the animating principle in all things, he must be the author both of good and evil; conversely, if man has no psychic existence separate from God, he is not free, and therefore not responsible—either of which destroys a vital principle in the religion of Jesus Christ. These difficulties have never been squared, and it is safe to say never will be with Christianity's present notion of Deity.

But it would, perhaps, be unprofitable to pursue this dilemma; let us rather take the two conceptions, and set before each the problem of creation; and in order to simplify matters, let the problem involve only a single series, such as the creation of our own cosmos, the sun and his retinue of worlds, down to the last ripple of created movement, say the animalcule swimming, with ocean-like freedom, in a drop of water.

First, then, did the "All-soul," the reservoir of quiescent force, the spirit or essence filling the uncreated universe, brood and bring forth the solar system?

Such a thought is absolutely fantastical. Where, in the experience of all mankind, did a block or cube of pure space ever do anything resembling the invention and execution involved in an act

of creation? I challenge any philosopher to produce from experience—and experience, remember, is the criterion of science—even the remotest analogy for such a thing. It is the absurdity of the mountain creating the temple.

We might indeed imagine intelligent beings walking about the earth, but so hooded as to see results—cities springing up on the plain, locomotives dashing across the continent, steamers plowing the ocean—without perceiving the agents. These might be pardoned for theorizing that an “All-soul” residing in the materials or forces making up a created thing, is the efficient cause of the creation; but how men, observing daily the agency involved in ten thousand acts of creation, could come to so crass a conclusion, is explicable only by remembering Buddha and his dream.

Again, by this conception, things created take form and outline by virtue of God being the animating principle. He is conceived as the all-pervading spirit of nature—the noumenon behind all phenomena. The human soul is figured as a breath of Deity breathed into the clay of our mortal habitation, or as a spark struck from the soul of God himself.

Now, what purpose, what possible motive, could a spiritual essence co-extensive with the universe have in creating, say, our solar system, or any other system for that matter? It could not have been for his better security, since by our very conception, he is the All-in-all; and if not for his security, then I can see only two other motives, his improvement or his diversion. The first we may dismiss at once; for how can that which is infinitely perfect have need of improvement by finite entanglements?

There remains, then, the last consideration. We are to contemplate the probability that the “All-soul” of the universe has involved that infinitesimal portion of himself which is bound by the orbit of Neptune into a blazing sun, a congeries of glowing, dead, and dying worlds, shooting stars and wandering comets, ice-capped poles and belching volcanoes, strutting bipeds and buzzing insects—all for the purpose of relieving the ennui, the monotony, of eternal bliss.

Is it thinkable? I shall, no doubt, be charged with blasphemy for daring to ask the meaning of creation. “It is not for the finite to question the infinite. We do not know—can not know—

what God's motives are." Which objection is precisely the conclusion which I have aimed to reach; viz., Creation, with the Buddhistic conception of God as creator, is motiveless, purposeless, from man's point of view.

And if this be so, what assurance, from the standpoint of reason, has man that things formed and limited will endure, i. e., that there is eternal existence for worlds, eternal life for man?

Buddhism answers flatly, denying the possibility; asserting, moreover, that there is eternal life (and bliss) for man only in Nirvana, the uncreated, or, as applied from our present point of view, the decremented state; in other words, that state in which the God-essence forming man's soul is completely disentangled from matter and re-absorbed in God.

This is undoubtedly the legitimate and logical outcome of such a conception of Deity. And yet to the Christian, Nirvana, involving as it does the complete loss of self-consciousness or sense of individual identity, is the worst state imaginable; it is worse than the second death—it is annihilation.

Accordingly, he refuses to follow out the inexorable logic of his oriental premises, but stops half way to build him a heaven in which shall reside a risen Redeemer—limited, remember, as to form—with multitudes of other individualized beings, including himself, together with thrones, mansions, cities with pearly gates, and streets paved with gold—for all which he claims eternal duration; whereby, though he has repudiated the only premises (i. e., the personal God of the Bible) which make possible either the organization or the eternal perpetuity of such a heaven, he yet very illogically holds fast to the conclusion from the premises set aside.

His clinging to the scriptural heaven makes him, in fact, twice illogical; first, in repudiating the conclusion of premises he accepts, (i. e. Nirvana) and second, in accepting the conclusion of premises he repudiates (i. e., Heaven). But bless him for his inconsistency. It shows that the vagaries of philosophy affect only his head; his heart, which is the altar of the Holy Spirit, still beats loyal to the true God.

Need I point out that from the "Mormon" conception, creation becomes immediately intelligible? The solar system was constructed in obedience to a necessity similar to that which impels

mortals to build colleges and universities; the changes going on in the cosmos, which scientists have collectively named evolution, take place from the necessity of adapting environment to the growing and varying intelligence of God's children; to the end that they may evolve in the direction which he has planned.

We "Mormons" trust the stability of creation, from the feeling that all this cosmical panorama is but the unfinished work of our Father's hands; for, knowing with what loving tenacity we earth-spirits hold to the working out of our feeble inventions and idealizations, we feel instinctively how dear to God must be the fruition of his perfect plans.

And as to the reality of heaven, as localized in the revelations of scripture, if it were not essential to the existence of God himself, (as would certainly seem to be the case with the other conception of God,) then we might, indeed, fear for its eternal perpetuity; but being in fact that state which is progressively the outcome of evolution, or, as "Mormons" put it, eternal progress; that state which is the sum-total at any moment of what God has achieved,—it is a necessary part of himself, the very quintessence of his work as Creator, and without which he himself as well as we should be homeless; and consequently, it is easier to have faith that heaven will endure than not to have such faith.

By way of bringing out another important relation between Creator and created, consider this illustration: John Jones has lost his way in a blizzard. Feeling a sense of drowsiness stealing over him, and realizing its terrible meaning, he kneels down and prays. Will his life, in consequence, be spared from the fury of the storm?

Before answering, take careful account of all the conditions. First, the storm is only doing the duty God appointed it to do; that is to say, it is the legitimate outcome of law. Law, on the other hand, provides that everything in the blizzard's path that is fitted to survive, shall survive—all the rest shall perish.

But John Jones asks in effect that these laws be set aside for his benefit; i. e., either that the storm be so mitigated that his natural strength may save him; or that he be miraculously raised into the rank of things fitted to survive. Suppose, in addition to praying for himself, he entreats mercy and protection for his horse, for the cattle he is seeking, for the buds in his orchard.

Will the indwelling soul of the universe stop to consider and act upon his petition?

The example fairly sets forth the inner meaning of prayer, and also its conditions. If the Christianized God of Buddha can (and will) act the roll of providence, that is, intervene and set aside the operation of his own laws, at the request of man, then it is logical to pray—otherwise not.

Is it rational to believe that an infinitely diffused spirit or essence could or would so intervene? Buddhism says emphatically no. God never acts as providence, but ever as of karma, the establisher of law, and dispenser of absolute justice in accordance therewith; and, consistently with this view, theosophists, the modern disciples of Buddha, teach that prayer is enervating; that a man can have his way against the universe only to the extent that he himself can influence his environments; to which end let him pray to nothing external,—let him rather assume, not the supplicative, but the compelling mental attitude: so shall the incarnation of Deity within him,—the only God with whom his psychic life can come into contact,—perhaps secure for him his desire.

It is difficult, on *a priori* grounds, to come to any other conclusion. First, there is the bigness of God and the littleness of Jones. Compared with infinitude, the solar system itself is relatively smaller than the smallest microscopic speck discernible to mankind. Where then does the man Jones come in? Secondly, for purposes of answering prayer, (as well as for all purposes), this infinitude must be considered unity not plurality; since, otherwise, ten thousand antagonistic prayers might be granted at once, to the undoing of the cosmos.

But answering a petition involves hearing it, considering it, granting it, and setting in motion the forces necessary to give it effect—in other words, it involves time. Now, Jones' petition is urgent: five minutes' delay may mean death to him. Will the "All-soul" of the universe suspend attention from a million other petitions—to say nothing of temporarily dropping out of mind such trifles as a million solar systems just shaping out of chaos—to listen to a man whose cupidity, perhaps, made him tempt the blizzard?

But even though infinitude could do such a thing, why should

it do so? By our very conception, whatever of life is manifested in Jones, his horse, his cattle, and his orchard, is merely the fleeting incarnation of the indwelling life of the universe. What bond of love or solicitude can be imagined between such a creator and his creatures—mere limitations of himself—that he, the infinite, should bend down and heed the selfish cry of the finite? Why should it seem better to him for these portions of himself to remain limited and finite than to be changed to the limitless and infinite?

But belief in an overruling providence does not, as it may here be pointed out, result from *a priori* but from *a posteriori* reasoning—that is to say, from experience. “Ask and ye shall receive,” said the Savior, and made the promise seem reasonable by this appeal to common sense: “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to them that ask ye, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him!”

And millions testing the promise, have found it true. Here, then, we have again the blessed inconsistency of men holding to conclusions derived from premises repudiated, and in spite of premises accepted. Another triumph for the human heart!

How much better it would be, however, if man's faith in providence—that is to say, in the effectiveness of prayer,—were reinforced by the head as well as by the heart. Observe that the God to whom the Savior pointed in the words just quoted was no spiritual abstraction, but a Father whom he compares with our earthly parents.

But, it may be objected, while God's love, out of which grow acts of intervention in behalf of his children, is thus satisfactorily accounted for, by conceiving him the personal Father of our spirits; while we may readily believe that the being who created the solar system for man, would also, were it in accordance with his wisdom, modify or set aside the general application of his will in the interest of individual cases, how is such a thing possible? Millions of petitions go to the Father at the same time, each requiring more or less specific attention.

The objection would hold were God alone engaged in listening to prayer and devising special providences. Let us, however, take a common sense view of the situation. The president of the

United States, for instance, comes either in person or by agent, into executive touch with every one of our eighty millions of people. Is it possible to conceive God as less resourceful?

I do not pretend to know how God answers all the prayers that should be answered; nor has "Mormonism" spoken definitely on this point. But the following conclusion may safely be inferred from well established premises in our religion: ninety-nine per cent of our prayers are probably passed upon by our guardian angels; the rest by councils of greater wisdom,—and by Jesus Christ, or God himself, if need be.

Nor would providences thus secured be any other than God's providences; for whoever, under God's appointment, does any of the works of God is to that extent exercising divine authority, which is the very essence of Deity and Godhead.

At any rate, with such a rational view of the *modus operandi* of providence, one can draw near to God with full confidence that if his petition involves that which will be for his own eternal good, it will be granted. The thought, however, opens up a marvelous new world, a world of beings behind the veil, and their relationship to us, which will be discussed in a later chapter.

THE MENACE OF THE TOWER.

A WORD FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY.

BY EDWIN MARKHAM, AUTHOR OF "THE MAN WITH THE HOE, AND
OTHER POEMS," ETC.

[In Italy it is customary to have bell towers attached to the churches and town halls. These bell towers are called campanili, and in Italy, contrary to the custom in the north and west of Europe, the campanile is almost always detached from the church. The most famous and remarkable campanili are to be found in Venice, Florence, Siena and Pisa. The leaning tower of Pisa, begun in 1174, is nothing more than a church tower built to rival the campanile of Venice. The campanile of Venice was begun in the beginning of the tenth century, and completed, up to the belfry, about the middle of the twelfth century. The belfry was not finished until 1517. The total height of the tower was three hundred and twenty-three feet, and it was forty-two feet square at the base. From the level of the piazza to the belfry stage, it was constructed of brick. The belfry with its surmounting pyramid were of marble. It was this thousand-year-old monument that collapsed, a few months ago, (July 14, 1902) without warning, and, to the consternation of citizens and visitors, fell into a heap of material, an utter ruin. The rebuilding of the campanile, in Venice, has now begun, and it is expected that the structure will be finished by 1906. The fall of this tower gave Edwin Markham the idea for the poem herewith presented.

"The Man with the Hoe," (to be obtained in book form with other of his poems,) it may be truly said, has created a more profound impression, in this country, than any other single poem of recent years. It has stamped Mr. Markham as one of the classic writers, one of the greatest poets of our time, and the "laureate of labor." It is a simple but vivid

presentation of one of the great social problems of our day, and finds sympathy in the hearts of the race because of its telling treatment of life's inequalities.

But the "Menace of the Tower," which the ERA herewith reprints from *The Independent*, New York, by special permission of Mr. Markham, contains also a thought worthy of the great author, and of our most serious consideration.—EDITORS.]

In storied Venice, down whose rippling streets
The stars go hurrying, and the white moon beats,
Stood the great Bell Tower, fronting seas and skies—
Fronting the ages, drawing all men's eyes;
Rooted like Teneriffe, aloft and proud,
Taunting the lightning, tearing the flying cloud.

It marked the hours for Venice: all men said
Time cannot reach to bow that lofty head:
Time, that shall touch all else with ruin, must
Forbear to make this shaft confess its dust;
Yet all the while, in secret, without sound,
The fat worms gnawed the timbers underground.

The twisting worm, whose epoch is an hour,
Caverned its way into the mighty tower;
And suddenly it shook, it swayed, it broke,
And fell in darkening thunder at one stroke.
The strong shaft, with an angel on the crown,
Fell ruining; a thousand years went down!

And so I fear, my country, not the hand
That shall hurl night and whirlwind on the land:
I fear not Titan traitors who shall rise
To stride like Brocken shadows on our skies—
Not giants who shall come to overthrow
And send on Earth an Iliad of wo.

I fear the vermin that shall undermine
Senate and citadel and school and shrine—
The Worm of Greed, the fatted Worm of Ease,
And all the crawling progeny of these—
The vermin that shall honeycomb the towers
And walls of state in unsuspecting hours.

Westerleigh, Staten Island, July 4, 1903.

A WOMAN'S STORY.

BY GEORGE E. BLAIR, AUTHOR OF "TALES OF THE
BUCKSKIN CLUB," ETC.

"A story, my children? well listen; 'Roll on silver moon, guide the traveler on his way,' sang a deep baritone voice, rolling out the words, the hills echoing and re-echoing them down the canyon.

"Ah, my children, it was many years ago, long before the iron horse panted and puffed his way across the plains, over the trail the sturdy pioneers made. Ah, yes, little ones, we had merry times in the old days. We loved and were loved, and the good God gave us strength to do many things that now seem hard indeed. Ah, but I remember how his voice thrilled me, that moonlight evening among the hills, rolling out so musically the words of the old song, which we had sung so often crossing the plains. Ah, my children, I can hear it yet. As he came nearer the camp, he changed the tune:

"Take off your coats boys, roll up your sleeves,
For Jordan is a hard road to travel, I believe.'

"And then came the song that always made Marie tremble, for Marie was French, a convert of my father's when in Canada. Oh, how I feared Marie. Little and dark, with piercing black eyes and a sharp little nose, which went poking into every one's business, and thin lips that could scold in half French and half English, oh so dreadfully. She never liked me, nor I her. She feared no one except father. When he turned his piercing, clear blue eyes upon her, she seemed to shrink into a little, shriveled witch, who could say nothing, only tremble and murmur. But I was telling you about the song. It was the Marseilles hymn. I have never for-

gotten it. It is the stirring battle hymn of the French Republicans:

*"Allons enfants de la patrie,
Le jour de gloire est arrive,
Contre nous de la tyrannie
L'étendard sanglant est levé."*

"For Starr Morley—"

"Why, grandma—"

"Hush, my child. For Starr, while an American lad, had lived, when a boy, close to the Canadian border, and been much with the French, learned their language and many of their songs. And Marie, oh, how she loved to hear him sing the Marseilles. And she loved Starr, although she was much older than he, for he was a handsome boy. Strong and straight, with hair that curled over his forehead, and eyes that were merry and full of fun all the long day.

"We were camping in the canyon; father and all the family, and our family was large, you know, together with some neighbors and friends, having a holiday for a week. How glorious was the moon that night! And in those days, my children, the moon looked ever so much bigger and brighter, and had more fascination than it now has for an old woman who has outlived her usefulness."

"Why, grandma!"

"Hush, my little Louise, I must tell the story. Lake Mary looked so beautiful in the moonlight that I had longed to walk by its mystic shore with some one I had begun to love very dearly. But Natalie was there, or Natty, as we called her, and she was Marie's favorite. 'Ah, Natalie, she is grande,' Marie would say. 'One grand, beautiful figure. And you—oh, you are only pretty and petite.' So Marie used all her cunning in keeping Natty and Starr together. I saw her whisper to Natty, and she went out to meet Starr; soon I heard his merry laugh, as she spoke to him, and then they went off down to the lake, and I, oh, my children, I fear I hated Marie. I saw her teeth gleam, and her little, dark eyes shine. The moon grew pale and the night lost its beauty for me. I fear my pillow had tears on it that night.

“Well, it was that way during our whole stay, and I had only a chance for a word or two with Starr. If Marie saw him and me talking, she would pop in and separate us by some means or other. Well, my children, the outing did me no good. Father, my dear, good father, who loved me best of all his flock, saw that I was worried. He patted me on the cheek, and said to be of good cheer, that all would be well. I could not believe him, for my heart was troubled. The long week came to an end, and we went back to complete the harvest. I saw little of Starr, for he was busy helping father with the grain, and in his spare time hauling lumber and rock, and piling it upon his city lot to build a house. People began to talk, saying that Starr would marry Natty. Oh, how Marie’s eyes danced in those days ! What wicked, triumphant glances she shot at me whenever Natty and Starr were together. She knew I was grieving, and rejoiced in it. ‘What a grand pair,’ she said to me. ‘He so dark an’ gay, and Natty so grand and beautifu.’ Ah, I hope you get a grand lov’ar,’ she would say, and then sigh and shake her head as though she knew I never would.

“Soon the chill of autumn crept into the days. The teams were getting back from their long journey to the east. Father’s teams had returned; some bringing emigrants and others merchandise. One day he came into my little bed room with a package done up in brown paper. He undid the paper, and spread out on the bed a bundle of white silk, with a cream rose pattern, some old point lace, a pair of silk hose, and dancing slippers. As I stood looking in amazement, a merry smile came to his mouth, his eyes twinkled, and his white teeth gleamed. ‘O, you good daddy,’ I said, and then I cried. He soothed me and laughed. ‘My little girl shall have a dancing dress fit for a queen,’ he said.

“How mother and I worked on that dress, my children, and how Marie scolded and acted ugly all the while, but dared do nothing. Soon it was finished, just in time for the first dance in the Social Hall, and a grand event it was to be. Oh, how happy I felt ! Ah, my children, I was young in those days, and my cheeks were red and my eyes bright, and I could dance, ah, how I could dance and never tire !

“Mother was dressing me in her room, and Marie came in. Oh, how she scowled ! I could see her face wrinkled into lines of

hate. I heard a step, and father was at the door, dressed in his best, for he was to take mother and me to the dance. He caught the look on Marie's face, and turned his great eyes full upon her with such a burning look that I thought she would wither up. 'Marie,' he said, in an awful voice, and very slowly, 'no more meddling with my little girl's affairs.' Marie trembling and murmuring left the room.

"Ah, what a dance we had ! There were others besides Starr who begged for dances that night, while Natalie scowled and sat against the wall. Starr asked me to let him take me home, and after keeping him waiting a long time for an answer, I finally consented, which I intended to do all the while. We walked home through the clear starlit night, chatting so gaily, he with his merry laugh ringing out, and his gay talk keeping me in the best of spirits, for no one could be dull with Starr around. Near our home, the water ditch had overflowed its banks, and made a big muddy puddle. We paused on the edge for an instant, then he picked me up in his strong arms, and before I could protest, carried me over and set me down upon the dry walk.

"I could not get away from him, his arm held me so tight, while I trembled and dared not look into his face. He put his hand under my chin and gently lifted up my face, 'Sweetheart,' he said, 'I love you, and I want you for my wife.'

"Then he looked at me in a proud way. How could I say him 'nay ?' He was not one to take nay, if he wanted anything. So I put up my hand gently, and touched his face, and he smiled his merry smile and kissed me. 'Oh, sweetheart,' he said, 'I have loved you for many a long day, but I've been afraid to tell you.'

"Well, my children, we were married a few weeks after. I was dressed in my silk dress, and father looked so glad and pleased that I told him he was happier than the bridegroom."

"And Marie, grandma—"

"Ah, my child, she would not stay after that night, and went to live with Natalie's folks.

"So, my children, this is an old woman's tale. Though my boy has slept for many years in God's quiet acre, yet he comes to me in dreams, and, in my waking hours, I hear his merry laugh, and sometimes I can see the curly head that lay upon my breast as he

breathed away his life. Ah, my children, heaven send you such a lover."

"Why, grandma?" said Louise.

"Some day thou shalt know, my little love, and may the knowledge be sweet to thee."

She put her hand on the curly head. "Some day," she said dreamily, "I shall see him again, but oh, the waiting's weary, the waiting's weary!"

TRANQUILITY.

The soul may tranquil be, despite its pain,
Despite wild tears that sweep across the heart
For hopes unsatisfied, for longings vain;
And for some griefs with which we would not part
For all the joys that gladdest lives afford,
Since they but lead us nearer thee, O Lord.

We plead not that all passions may be still
With the pale stillness that resembles death,
Unknowing love's great warmth and grief's deep chill—
Calm only with the calmness when no breath
Doth stir the bosom of the sea of life,
And heedless seems alike of joy and strife.

But, 'midst the storms that beat, give us to smile,
And cheeful gaze with fearless eye on fate—
Mindful (since thou canst patient wait the while),
Ours, then, the duty is to patient wait.
So may we feel thy Spirit's calm delight
Sink on our hearts, as doth the tranquil night.

R. W. SLOAN.

THE "DIVINITY THAT SHAPES OUR ENDS."

BY EDWIN F. PARRY.

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.—*Shakespeare.*

It is often observed that the history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reads like a romance. Everyone who is acquainted with this history can testify that it is unique and marvelous. There is no community of modern times that has had such varied and thrilling experiences as those which have fallen to the lot of this people. As is the case with the story of the Savior and his followers in olden times, that of his latter-day disciples can be told over and over again, and is always fresh and inspiring.

The story of the lives of individual members of the Church, so far as it is recorded and known, is also dramatic and wonderful. It is replete with stirring adventures, romantic incidents, heroic deeds, and other features which serve to make it interesting as well as instructive. In the lives of many of its members, as in the career of the Church as a body, there are events which forcibly suggest that their destinies were shaped by a great overruling Power; and this fact makes the perusal or study of such biographies additionally charming to the thoughtful reader.

Let us briefly review the life-narratives of a few characters among the Latter-day Saints by way of illustrating or confirming the statement from Shakespeare which appears at the head of this paper. In the limited space available, only a few life-sketches can be outlined in the briefest manner; this, however, will be sufficient for the present purpose.

Eighty years ago there was born to a humble shoemaker and his wife, in the State of New York, a son who for a time, after becoming old enough, followed his father's occupation; but early in his teens he began the life of a sailor as cabin boy. He soon became attached to a sea-faring life, and his ambition was to become master of a ship. At the age of twenty-two, he went as an able seaman on a whaling expedition to southern waters. The vessel with which he sailed cruised along the coast of South America, in the straits of Magellan, around Cape Horn, and about the Falkland islands.

After several exciting adventures, during the several expeditions he accompanied to the South seas, he embarked on a whaler bound for the Arctic ocean. While hunting whales in the Okhotsk sea, he met with a severe accident which not only nearly cost him his life but had the effect of entirely changing his course. Being disabled for service as a seaman, he was put ashore upon one of the Sandwich islands. Here he recovered sufficiently to work at his early avocation of shoemaking. Later he went to San Francisco, intending to continue his journey eastward, back to his native State, where he expected to marry and then return to the Sandwich islands to make his home. But subsequent events again changed his intentions. In San Francisco, he became acquainted with some of the Latter-day Saints and members of the "Mormon" Battalion; for it was in 1847—the year in which that famous body of soldiers was disbanded in California. He embraced the gospel; and, soon after the discovery of gold in that land, set out for the mines. After mining for a few weeks, he bought an outfit, joined a company bound for Salt Lake valley, and arrived at the pioneer fort in September, 1848.

From that time till the day of his death, his interests were united with those of the Saints, and he filled many positions of responsibility among the people. Instead of returning to his old home to find a wife, he met the lady who was destined to be his future companion in the valley. This young lady with her mother had accepted the gospel in her native State—Pennsylvania—and together the mother and daughter had migrated to Utah the same year as did the first company of pioneers. Only a little over two months elapsed after his arrival in the valley before the immigrant

from the west was wedded to the young woman from the east. The two were congenial spirits, and together they worked for the advancement of the great latter-day cause. Together they filled a mission to the Sandwich islands; together they went as pioneers to the country north of Salt Lake City; together they became leading members of the little community which they were helping to establish—he as bishop of the ward, and she as president of the Relief society. In the early days, the husband was one of the militia, and helped defend the people and protect them in their homes. He filled several missions abroad and in foreign lands; labored at home, exploring the country, establishing colonies; engaged in manufacturing pursuits, helped build railroads, etc.; and for nearly a score of years presided over a stake of Zion. Not least among his achievements, he raised a large family of children to honor and perpetuate his name in the earth. The man whose career is so briefly outlined above is Francis A. Hammond, late president of the San Juan stake of Zion; and his wife who has been mentioned, Mary Jane Dilworth, who held the distinction of being the pioneer school teacher of Utah.

I remarked that it was an accident that changed our hero's course of life. (I refer to the mishap that occurred to him while on a whaling voyage.) Such happenings are called accidents. But was this an accident, or was it design on the part of a guiding Providence? I am strongly inclined to the belief that the Lord permitted that event to take place for a definite purpose fully understood by him, while, no doubt, considered a mystery to the one who received the bodily injury. Knowing that the man possessed the qualification and disposition to perform an important and necessary part in bringing to pass his designs in the earth, he took this method of leading the man to the place where he was needed, and where he might accomplish the greatest amount of good. And this belief forces me to another conclusion, or at least another query, and that is, if what I have just stated is a fact in the case spoken of, is it not true of all our lives? Are not all our so-called misfortunes or accidents brought about for a purpose, and that purpose our development and advancement? They may be regarded as mishaps, with no significance, and we may think it impossible that the Lord has anything to do with such occurrences.

It may be asked, how can he give attention to such small details? How can he overrule these minor incidents in the lives of his millions of children? I can only say in answer to such questions that his ability to do so is one evidence of his omnipotence. That he does direct in what we may consider small matters as well as in important affairs is apparent, for frequently it happens that what appears to be simple accidents result in mighty consequences. Great impending calamities are averted by seemingly insignificant means; and even the course of the world's history is changed by apparent trifles.

Another question that might be asked concerning this man's career is: why did he desire to leave the Sandwich Islands and go to New York to get a wife, then return to the Islands to make his home? It was a long and expensive trip, and presumably he did not have the necessary means to carry out his intention, for immediately upon landing in San Francisco, he went to work at his trade that he might earn money to take him further on his journey. We might conclude that his love for home and, perhaps, for some particular young lady of his acquaintance, prompted the desire for the journey. If this was the case, the course he afterwards pursued shows that his love for the gospel, after becoming converted to it, was even stronger than his love for home and sweetheart, for, instead of continuing his journey to the far east, as soon as he raised sufficient means, he went to the uninviting deserts of Utah, and wholly abandoned the plan he started to carry out. But whatever motive he had in going to San Francisco, I believe it was Providence that led him there, that he might learn of the truths of the gospel. Had he remained on the Sandwich Islands, he probably would not have heard the gospel until several years later, when Latter-day Saint missionaries first visited the Islands.

A review of the life of Dr. Karl G. Maeser will furnish another testimony to sustain the claim that there is a divinity that determines the destiny of man, and that in many a simple incident there is hidden a deep design.

Born in Meissen, Saxony, in 1828, he was educated for a teacher, and taught school in Dresden and other places. Eventually, he became head teacher in the Budig institute. When a boy, his

attention was first attracted to "Mormonism" by an illustration that appeared in a newspaper. The impression then made upon his mind was such that he had a desire to meet one of the "Mormon" faith, and later in life he took steps to gratify that desire by writing letters of inquiry to representatives of the Latter-day Saints who were then in Europe, and whose addresses he obtained. While teaching in the above-mentioned institute, in Dresden, he had the privilege of meeting with some "Mormon" elders. The outcome was, he was baptized into the Church, came to Utah, taught school in Salt Lake City. His ability as a teacher being recognized, he was called to establish the Brigham Young Academy, at Provo. He was the man for the position, as the record he made has fully proved. His labors in the cause of education in that institution, and later throughout Zion, brought him everlasting honor and gratitude, and his influence for good will live and extend indefinitely.

In reflecting upon the life and labors of this one of the foremost of Zion's educators, I am tempted to ask the question, why was he so strongly influenced by what little he heard of "Mormonism" to take the pains to inquire about it? No doubt what little he had heard was unfavorable, then why trouble himself about such an unpopular people who were afar off in a foreign land? The only answer I can find to the inquiry is that "the Spirit of God wrought upon the man"—using the language of the Book of Mormon in reference to the "man among the Gentiles"—Columbus. If Zion was to become what the prophets predicted should be her lot, it was necessary that her sons and daughters should be educated and accomplished, and there was need of just such a teacher as was found in Dr. Maeser to help bring about the desired result. Can anyone acquainted with the work he was instrumental in accomplishing deny that he was inspired!

While referring to the subject of education, it may be in place to call attention to other educators who have been led to these valleys, and whose advent among the Saints has been most opportune and providential. Notable among such men was the late Dr. John R. Park, who was for so many years the guiding genius of what is now the University of Utah. That he was led herē by some overruling power, there is no doubt in my mind. Dr. Park

was born May 7, 1833, at Tiffin, Seneca County, Ohio. He was of a studious disposition, and graduated from several institutions, including a medical college of New York. After practicing medicine for some time, he turned to teaching, for which calling he seemed eminently gifted. Having a desire to go to the Pacific coast, he set out for the west, and, in the fall of 1861, reached Salt Lake City. It being late when he arrived, and storms having set in, he decided to postpone the remainder of his journey until the following spring. He secured employment as a teacher in a country school. Being kindly received by the people, he soon found himself being drawn towards them in his sympathies. He investigated the doctrines of the Church and accepted them. Not being fully satisfied in abandoning entirely his anticipated visit to the coast, he left Utah and journeyed on towards the setting sun. He remained on the coast for some time, but could not content himself there. By some undefined power, he was impelled to return to the vales of Utah. Though he knew it not at the time, there was his field of activity; there the stage on which his part in the world's great drama should be played. He obeyed the prompting, and retraced his steps to the city of the Saints. The remainder of his story is well known. He was called to take charge of the University, which for years had had but a nominal existence; but through his ceaseless efforts, it was brought up to a high standard as an educational institution, and a foundation was established for its continued growth.

At the close of the War of the Rebellion, there came to Utah a young man who had served in the Union army with courage and distinction, having participated in several of the most important battles. He was a native of Indiana, in which state he was born, August 8, 1842. On his arrival in Salt Lake City, he engaged as a teacher in the Deseret University, and afterwards established a commercial college, which he conducted for a number of years. The person I refer to is the late Elder John Morgan, and the college he opened was known as the Morgan College. While he attained success as an educator, Elder Morgan gained greater distinction as a missionary. He is regarded as the father of the Southern States mission—one of the most important in the Church. In this mission he spent some fourteen years, during

some of the most trying periods; and much of the success that has been attained in that field of labor is due to his unceasing energies. The last two years of his life, he was one of the first seven presidents of seventies, and also one of the general superintendents of the Deseret Sunday School Union, and in this dual capacity, he traveled much among the stakes of Zion, preaching to the people, organizing quorums, and attending to such labors as devolved upon him in the callings he filled. It was said of Brother Morgan at his funeral that he was one of the most successful missionaries the Church had ever had; and yet he was a comparatively young man at the time of his death, which occurred a few days after he had turned fifty-two years of age. The energy and ability he displayed, and the success he gained as a missionary, cannot but lead one to the conclusion that by divine selection he was called to the positions he so ably filled. Whatever might have been the immediate cause of his coming to Utah, back of it all was the promptings from a divine source. Like other men who have lived to a purpose, he filled a marked-out destiny.

That women as well as men have been raised up to perform certain labors for the accomplishment of God's purposes is evident; and that their early environments and training have tended to fit them for the positions they have filled is also apparent.

Out of the many examples that might well serve the purpose, I select that furnished by the life of one of Utah's pioneer women.

In an obscure village of far-off Norway was born, in 1824, a child who became known as Ellen Saunders. She was the daughter of a prosperous farmer, and one of a family of seven children. Until she was thirteen years old, her life was spent in her native land and about her rural home. In the year 1837, her father sold the farm and emigrated to America with others of his countrymen. He went with his family to Indiana, where he took up land. Being a generous-hearted man, he loaned or gave away much of the proceeds from the sale of his home in Norway; and in a little more than a year from the time he came to America, he and his wife died, leaving the children to become scattered, for in two years all their property was gone, and they sought employment wherever it was to be found. They first went to La Salle, Illinois,

where they had relatives. From that place, Ellen went to Ottawa, where she hired out. In the year 1842, missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints came preaching in the neighborhood where some of the Saunders family were living, and some of them, including Ellen, embraced the gospel. Two years later Ellen went to Nauvoo, and in January, 1846, she was married to Heber C. Kimball; and when the band of pioneers was organized for the purpose of seeking out for the exiled Saints a dwelling place in the unexplored western deserts, she with her husband was numbered with it, and gained the distinction of being one of the three pioneer women of Utah. As she lived nearly a quarter of a century in the valleys of Utah, she had the satisfaction, in her lifetime, of realizing to some extent the importance of the work of that courageous band, and of beholding some of the beneficial results of their efforts.

That this woman became one of the illustrious pioneers of Utah may be regarded as a chance incident; and it may be thought that her being chosen as one of that company was not because of any special fitness for such a work. Such might have been the case so far as human agency was concerned; but the fact that she proved equal to the undertaking—that she was enabled to endure the severe hardships of the journey, and to battle so heroically with the difficulties and trials that confronted the early settlers, after the journey to the mountains was ended—is an indication that her early life experiences were for a purpose, and that to prepare her for the strenuous career that awaited her. Had her life previous to this arduous undertaking been passed in ease and wealth, she no doubt would not have been possessed of the physical power nor the determination of will to perform such a labor. And what is here said of this lady might be applied to the pioneers of this country generally. They were men and women eminently fitted by previous training for the parts they were called upon to perform. And there is no doubt that they were prepared for their life-work under divine direction.

It is true that among those who undertook to reach these valleys, in those early days of hardship and privation, some fell by the way—their spirits were willing but their bodies were weak—and they succumbed to the terrible hardships of the journey. But

even this seemed to be a providential circumstance. By this application of what is called the law of natural selection, which is only another name for the law of divine selection, Utah became peopled by a sturdy race of men and women.

I have mentioned only a very few out of the many examples that might be presented to confirm the belief that the Lord takes cognizance of the acts of his children—that there is a divinity that determines their destiny. Hundreds more might be cited if necessary. The life of every individual who has attained to any success, either small or great, if closely examined would, no doubt, reveal evidence of divine guidance—every one, it seems, has been directed to the place he is best fitted to occupy. But what about those whose lives are failures? I believe the same statement will also apply to them. They, too, without doubt, were recipients of the same divine care, but, having their own agency, as all mankind have, they chose to disregard the admonitions of that guiding divinity, and by doing so have failed in the accomplishment of any great good in life; yet it may be said they have attained to the destiny for which they were best fitted, even though it be the fate of the drunkard or the doom of the criminal.

While the illustrations I have presented are from the lives of persons more or less prominent among the Latter-day Saints, I have not mentioned the great leaders of the people—such men as Joseph and Hyrum Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, Heber C. Kimball, Parley P. and Orson Pratt, George A. Smith, Daniel H. Wells, Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, George Q. Cannon, and others of the past, and those of the present. By what subtle power were so many of these strong characters brought together and united so firmly in one grand cause? Surely it was not the personal influence of any ordinary mortal, or even superior human being, unaided by a higher power. It is doubtful if any other such group of strong characters—men of such sublime moral courage, and so well fitted to perform the parts to which they were assigned—as the ones referred to, could be found in any other community in the world. Assuredly there was a divinity that shaped their ends, and fitted them together in the foundation of the mighty structure known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Lat-

ter-day Saints. Their lives and labors furnish pointed proof of the fact which I have been endeavoring to establish. And who that possesses a knowledge of the history of these men, and what they have done, can deny that they were divinely inspired, and that the work they sought to build up is the work of God? The history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is in itself a powerful testimony of its divinity.

EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW.

BY RUTH M. FOX.

I stood in the valley and wondered
Where the God of the mountains could be,
As they towered triumphant above me,
Maintaining his majesty,
In all their magnificent grandeur,
Proclaiming eternity.

Enthralled, I gazed on the lightning
Flashing far from the east to the west,
Fantastically striking the heav'ns,
And piercing the mountain's proud crest;
But I questioned, whence comes this wild beauty,
And wherefore my soul's unrest?

I listened in awe to the thunder,
When it trembled and crashed o'er my head,
Quivering the great earth beneath me,
And filling my being with dread;
Still the demon of doubt did possess me:
"Where is the great God?" I said.

Then turning about to the ocean,
With it's mysteries hidden and deep,
Envy[ing] the peace of the sleepers
That neath the dark surface did sleep;
I cried out, "Say, where is thy master,
And who doth thy bound'ries keep?"

Out from the depths of the waters
There came a significant roar:
"Thou fool, seekest thou the Eternal
Who made both the ocean and shore ?
Who made thee, thou questioning doubter ?
Go, lift thine eyes and adore."

I turned from the cold, surging billows
Half ashamed of my lingering doubt,
Distrustful, unloved and unhappy,
The hope of the future shut out,
While even the voices of nature
Appeared my mad follies to scout.

Then the moon swept forth from its hiding,
And the stars twinkled in the blue dome,
Shedding their radiance about me,
As mine eyes the landscape did roam.
Subdued by the exquisite beauty,
I stood there, repentant, alone.

I lifted mine eyes towards heaven
With a longing displacing despair;
I knew I had sinned, but dared not,
In my stubborn heart form a pray'r.
Yet I felt that a Master Designer,
Had fashioned this planet so fair.

Through the hush then stole a soft whisper—
Yet 'twas keen as a two-edged sword:—
"Oh man, didst thou doubt thy Creator ?"
I fell on my knees to my Lord.
Ev'ry tongue shall confess the Redeemer,
Ev'ry knee shall bow to his word.

THE THOUGHT OF SELF.

BY GRACE FROST, OF SALT LAKE CITY.

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ”
(Gal. 6:2).

Is not this a law of our Savior which is being kept very little by people at the present day? It is now “every man for himself,” regardless of his fellow man. Even in our own Church this is the case to a greater or less extent, yet we are called brothers and sisters, and the evil is still growing.

Our neighbor may be in trouble, but if we are not intimately acquainted, we consider it not our business, especially if he is not of our faith. We go pleasure-seeking while one, perchance in the next house, is bowed down with sorrow. How can we? If the person be “Mormon,” Jew or Gentile he is one of God’s children, and, being so, is entitled to our love and sympathy. The gospel should broaden not narrow our minds. Sympathy is sweet, even though it come from a Hottentot, and one’s burden is lightened thereby.

There are some people who obey the Master’s words concerning lightening the burdens of others, but they are few compared with those who do not. Young people are much given to this evil.

There are many of them who are even unmindful of the burdens carried by those of their own household. Mothers are worn out with domestic duties, while daughters are going hither and thither having a good time, never seeing the weary eye and lagging step of their parent; and sons are allowing their fathers to carry like burdens.

What is going to happen if this condition goes on? If children do not care enough for those to whom they owe their being

to share their burdens, they will never learn to bear the burdens of others in after life.

Girls and boys, begin now. It is never too late to mend. There are few things more displeasing in our Heavenly Father's sight than "selfishness." It is one of the "roots of all evil."

Let us show by acts of consideration and kindness that we are unselfish and love our fellow men. Christ says that we must first love our brother whom we have seen, or we can never love God whom we have not seen. If we love our brother, we must show our love, and in no greater way can this be done than in setting one's selfish desires aside and helping him to bear his burdens. In doing this, we will not only help our brothers and sisters, but please the one who was so unselfish that he died for us, his brothers and sisters. Can any one follow in more unselfish footsteps? Let us hold our crosses with one hand (for all have crosses, though some are heavier and rougher than others) while we help some poor, shipwrecked brother to steady his; and look upward ever to our Savior. His cross was heavy, so heavy that he staggered under its weight, but he bore it uncomplainingly and unselfishly, for it was for our sake. Always remember this, and though our cross be ever so heavy, we can lighten its weight by thinking of those borne by our brothers and sisters. Do not try to shirk it, but bear it bravely, asking God to help you and all who have a cross to bear. The "prayer of self" is not a fit prayer for any of us. Instead of saying "Father, help me," say "Father, help us," remembering our Elder Brother said in his prayer, "Father, give us our daily bread," not "Give me my daily bread."

Selfishness is a powerful foe to fight, but we must all conquer it, if we intend to keep the commandments of God and ever come to the perfection of loving our neighbor as ourself.

THE PROPHET AND THE SALT LAKE TEMPLE:

BY J. L. TOWNSEND, PAYSON, UTAH.

(*For the Improvement Era.*)

Who hath a prophet's eye?
Who dares to cast the die,
And say to Destiny, "Thus shalt thou be!
Here, where the sagebrush grew,
Here, where the ouzel flew,
He forward looked: he could this temple see;
For faith and vision shapes our destiny!

Who hath a prophet's ear,
The still small voice to hear,
And learns what God desires shall be made known?
His voice shall ring along
Through centuries of song;
His fame be known when other fame has flown,
A royal regent of God's royal throne!

Who hath the power to do,
Unwavering and true,
The will of God? 'Tis he whom God ordains!
God's seal upon the brow
Shows why, and when, and how;
All heights above, all depths beneath, attains;
Gives power, gives strength—all mystery explains!

Who hath an iron will?
Who can his hearers thrill
With some great hope, some purpose loved and vast?
Yet here love's labor brought
The skill, the faith, that wrought
This massive TEMPLE, welding first and last
All dispensations of the mighty Past.

A LIFE SKETCH.

BY SARAH E. PEARSON.

PART I.

There are many beautiful testimonies of the existence of things unseen which are never recounted to the scoffer at all, and not always, for one cause or another, to the children of the covenant. Yet to speak of those things which are lawful tends to increase our faith and add to our patient endurance under stress of suffering.

We may know the things of God by the Spirit of God, and that, to the pure and fervent mind, is one of the strongest and most wonderful, as well as the commonest of testimonies.

It is not given to everyone to have visions or the ministration of angels, but we who may not be so favored love to hear the experience of those who do.

I have often had it in my mind to write something of the life-experience of my maternal grandfather, Nathan Staker, who passed from this sphere of action some years ago, at a ripe old age, leaving many descendants in this western country. He was four or five years the senior of the Prophet Joseph, and was of German-Dutch extraction.

My first introduction to a sketch of the history of my "forebears" on my mother's side came in this wise: My mother's sister, Mary A. Farnsworth, was one day visiting at my home, when I brought out a genealogy of my father's family three hundred years back, and showed her the long line of American patriots and statesmen, remarking that I was very proud of my American ancestry. She laughed, and said,

"My dear girl, 'pride goeth before a fall;' for your great-grandfather, on your mother's side, was a native of Hesse-Cassel in

Germany—one of the hired Hessians who came over here to fight Washington.”

“Oh, you have no cause to be ashamed of him,” she added, seeing my look of almost comical dismay; “he was a soldier, too, and a brave one, if tradition goes for anything, even if his interests were for the time being on the wrong side. So was Saul’s of Tarsus, you remember, and, like Paul, the Spirit of God came upon him, and he did not long remain an enemy and an alien. To his credit, he laid down the sword for the pruning hook, identified himself with the country he in his ignorance came to help subdue, partook of her spirit, was true to her institutions, and founded the American branch of the family.”

We can well believe that the prospect of a government by the people and for the people, in this fair, new land of liberty, was very attractive to the soldier-serf of an over-crowded fatherland. It also seems reasonable to believe that he possessed deep reverence for religion, as that is a distinguishing trait of so many of his descendants, and I like to believe that it was given him to know that his coming was a direct dispensation of Providence, that his children might have not only political liberty but the restored gospel of Jesus Christ pure and undefiled. From this ancestor, his great grandson Nathan, the subject of this sketch, inherited the German characteristics of pride of country, love of family, thrift, sterling integrity, and a quick temper. He was also gifted in faith, and singularly spiritually minded, and these same traits predominate in many of his descendants. In early manhood, he married Jane Richmond, an English lady of gentle birth and great beauty, and, as one of the facetious members of the family remarks, no doubt that is where we get our good looks.

The newly married pair “moved out west,” as so many under similar circumstances did in that day, to found a home among the virgin forests, and “grow up with the country.”

They labored diligently to build them a home, and he raised the usual farm crops, together with maple sugar making; and she carded, and spun, and wove, and did her own household work and sewing for the family, which grew gradually larger as the years rolled by. In those days “the beauty of their garments” were, indeed, “the workmanship of their own hands;” in fact, utility was

considered before beauty. Today we are whirling along by electricity, and some of us going at the pace that kills, with half the work and double the worry which our grandmothers had.

Nathan had been raised a Methodist. He was a Bible student, a class leader, and very devout; and he and his busy little wife had each winter of their voluntary exile looked forward to this season of comparative relaxation from labor with pleasant anticipations of social festivities with distant neighbors, and also of revivals in religion, when the music of the popular hymn,

Poor, mourning soul in deep distress,
Most worn away with trouble,

would pulse on the air with true Methodist fervency and frequency.

True, a feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction with his professed religion, from a Bible standpoint, had of late taken possession of him, but Methodism was the best that he knew anything about, and he tried to make the best of it.

As this particular winter season approached, however, of which I wish to speak, one of their little ones sickened, and, in spite of all their devoted care, grew steadily worse, until he lay at death's door. The parents were worn out with watching, and the mother discouraged and despairing.

They knew nothing of authority or priesthood, those potent agents which have won the aid and favor of the Almighty in these glorious days of the restored gospel, but Nathan believed that the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and he tried to live for it. For two days he fasted, and then retired secretly into the woods to pray. Kneeling down by the side of a log, he poured forth his whole soul in prayer that God would stay the hand of the destroyer, and give back to the stricken mother the life of her little one. And gloriously was his prayer answered, for an angel came in person, and, laying his hands upon his head, blessed him for his perseverance and faith, and promised that his child should be spared adding, for himself, he should yet live to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and bring many souls into the true fold. Now this had long been the secret ambition and desire of his soul, but he had no idea,

at the time, that the promise of the angel meant anything else than the preaching of Methodism.

In speaking of his experience afterwards, he said that he seemed for the time being to be taken out of the body, for though the angel stood directly behind him, he could see him distinctly, and described him as a shining personage, with robes of exceeding whiteness, and the hands which lay upon his head were transparent; and not only could he see the angel, but he could see himself kneeling beside the log. Never, through all his life afterward, could he speak of this glorious experience without weeping.

After the angel departed, he returned to the house. As he appeared in the door, his wife, who sat by the bedside of the sick child grieving over it, looked up, and was awed and frightened by his appearance and expression.

"What is the matter, Nathan?" she cried.

He tottered toward the bed, and with the words "Be comforted, the child shall live," fell over upon the bed in a deep swoon. She thought for a moment he was dead, and wringing her hands in anguish, cried, "He has given his life for the child. Oh, I have done wrong in clinging to my babe as I have done. I should have submitted without murmur to the will of God." But after a time, he revived, and told her what he had seen and heard, and their hearts were filled with thanksgiving and a solemn joy.

PART II.

As we get "line upon line and precept upon precept," so afterwards was the true gospel brought to them, and you know Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me." Then did they begin to understand in full the glorious promises made by the angel.

They made the usual sacrifices to gather to Zion, and tarried for a time in Kanessville, where several members of the family contracted smallpox, and the faithful mother died of it. As she lay ill upon her bed, entirely blind by the disease, they brought her baby to her to nurse, but he cried and clung to his sister, and would not go to his mother at all. "Ah, I must be an awful sight

indeed if my baby boy doesn't know me," she said, as she reached the loving arms for him in vain.

After a time, the sorrowing husband and motherless children continued on their way alone, and many of the people in the settlements through which they passed came out to see the long trains of "Mormons," as though they were a wild beast show. A little boy sitting on a gate-post in one of the towns to watch them pass by, turned to his father and was heard to remark, "Why, papa, I don't see but what they look just like other folks."

While in camp, near a certain village, Brother Staker sent his daughter Sarah to a tin shop to have the handle soldered to a quart cup, cooking utensils being scarce and hard to procure. When she stated her errand, the tinner thought he would have some fun with this unfledged "Mormon," so he winked slyly to the by-standers and said,

"So you want the handle soldered to your cup, do you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why, you're a 'Mormon,' ain't ye?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then why don't you have faith that the handle will solder itself, and surely it would be so according. Haven't you faith to heal your cup?"

"No, sir, I haven't faith that I can mend my cup; but if you will put the handle on good, I have faith that it will stay on."

The bystanders laughed and clapped their hands, and the tinner was so amused with the answer that he mended the cup "good," according to her request, and refused any compensation for his trouble.

After a long and toilsome journey, they reached the "promised land," and here faced uncomplainingly new conditions and many hardships. And the children grew up and waxed strong, and took the world much as it came, as children will; and if their wants occupied the father's hands, their little sayings and doings solaced his heart, as God intended they should. Yet there were times when he felt keenly his inability to fill the double duty of father and mother, and his heart bled within him for the loss of one at once so dear and so necessary to the welfare of the children. By degrees they scattered out. Some had married, and some went

away to work, and one little fellow was drowned, while bathing in the treacherous Spring Lake, until at last there was only the father and the baby, now three years old, left at home.

Once, when he had no one with whom to leave the child, while he went into the hills to hunt his team, he thought he would give him something to interest him and slip away, leaving him for a little while alone. But the little laddie had been served that way once or twice before, and was on the lookout, so that he found it impossible to get away without his knowledge. At last he told him he must stay and be good while papa went to hunt the oxen. The little fellow cried bitterly, and finding it impossible to pacify him, the father was forced to tear himself rudely from the chubby clinging fingers, and, with a final charge not to wander off, started on his quest. For a long time the sound of his baby's sobbing followed him, but at last it ceased. He had gone perhaps a distance of two miles when he chanced to glance down, and lo! at his side, looking up at him with a most pathetic expression of fear, joy, and pleading, was his little lad.

"Ah, my Joe, what am I to do with you now?" the father exclaimed. "You cannot walk, and I cannot carry you far, for I may have miles to go. You must go back." But finding himself unable to prevail on him to go back by kind means—and harshness to his motherless babe was out of the question—he hit upon another expedient. Unfastening one of his home-made leather suspenders, he proceeded to tether him to a sagebrush. The baby watched the proceedings with wonder, then with consternation, and when his father said, "If papa's laddie won't go back, I shall have to tie him here so I will know where to find him after I have found the oxen," and actually started off leaving him there; his wailing broke out afresh.

"Oh, papa, I'll do home. Untie me, papa, an' I'll do home."

With quivering lip the father returned, untied him, kissed the flushed, tear-stained little face, and set his feet on the homeward path. Bravely the little fellow trudged away, never once looking backward, till a bend in the road hid him from sight.

"You may think it a trifling incident," said the father, once when speaking of it, "but it had the elements of tragedy in it for

us, didn't it, little Joe; and for miles I could not see my way for tears."

* * * * *

One day, while taking dinner with Bishop Henson Walker and family, of Pleasant Grove, the bishop jocularly remarked, "Brother Staker, there is the wife for you," indicating an estimable English lady, a widow, who, with her two children, had recently arrived with the handcart company, and who sat at the table with them. And so it proved to be. They made each other's acquaintance, married, and moved into Sanpete county, where they made a comfortable home, reared more babies to sit on his knees and lullaby to his favorite Methodist hymn tune of "Poor, mourning soul," and where, at the ripe age of eighty-four, he passed to his reward.

His mother came to him from the east to spend her few remaining years at his side, and it was his joy to convert her to "Mormonism." She lived to be one hundred and one, outliving her son one year.

He had inherited a constitutional dread of death, but many years before, at his prayerful solicitation, the manner of his death had been shown him in vision, and he dreaded it no more. And truly, it was the ideal death of a patriarch after a well-spent life—his surroundings comfortable and peaceful, himself free from pain, with a heart full of love and blessing for neighbors, friends, and family, and retaining his consciousness until the last moment, when he fell asleep. Truly, "blessed are they who die in the Lord, for their death shall be made sweet to them."

Such are the annals of the poor and meek of the earth—not short and simple, as the poet says, but varied, and complex with the mystery and pathos of life.

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PRESIDENT LYMAN'S TRAVELS AND MINISTRY.

BY JOSEPH J. CANNON, ASSOCIATE EDITOR OF THE "MILLENNIAL
STAR," LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND.

There are many missions that may be given an Elder of Israel. The one that President Francis M. Lyman is now filling may be characterized as a mission of prayer, though naturally prayer is not the only matter that has occupied his time and attention. The central event of his recent journey through the European mission was the dedication of the chapel house at Christiania, Norway. [July 24, 1903, there were one hundred and forty-eight missionaries from all parts of the mission present.] When the meetings of that great gathering of the Priesthood were over, he traveled by rail to Stockholm, and there on Sunday attended two meetings and a Sunday school. President Lyman occupied most of the evening meeting, his discourse being interpreted into the Swedish tongue. Both Presidents Lyman and Skanchy promised the people that if all went well, Stockholm, like Christiania and Copenhagen, should have a suitable house of worship. This was naturally very pleasing to the Saints, who are earnestly seeking to find a suitable location for the erection of such a building. None has yet been chosen.

Stockholm should really be a profitable field for our labors. The beautiful city is growing fast, and few cities in the world are indulging such a well-planned and thoroughly executed system of improvement. Where mountains of granite rock stand to hinder the opening of a street, they are blasted away and the hollows are filled with the debris. The city buys, as fast as possible, all property along crooked or narrow streets, tears down the houses, and

widens and straightens the thoroughfares. But Stockholm is not only a progressive city in material affairs, but is also a good home for the Saints. Great religious freedom is enjoyed, and while in Norway the sacrament may not be administered publicly, in Sweden no legal hindrance is placed in the way of the performance of gospel ordinances. The elders may be forbidden to preach anything that causes division in the state church, but this power is very seldom resorted to.

Monday evening, August 3rd, President Lyman set sail for Finland. Our passports had been duly vised by the Russian consul—otherwise tickets could not have been bought. The cruise through the Stockholm archipelago in the bright moonlight, with the dark shade of the firs and pines on the banks broken by the gleam from the windows of the villas, was one never to be forgotten. We passed through the open part of the Baltic during the night, and when morning dawned we were again plowing through a network of islands—the Abo archipelago. We reached this old Finnish city at noon. We had thought that all the inhabitants understood Swedish, but were unable to find a cab-driver who spoke that language, and only one who understood a few words. This, with subsequent experiences, brought the conviction that any general missionary work in Finland must be done by those who speak Finnish; a knowledge of Swedish is not enough. The better classes speak both languages, at least in the southern part and along the coast, but seven-eighths of the people speak the language of the country—Finnish.

In one of the odd little open cabs we rode around the city, visited the ancient castle and finally reached the top of a finely wooded hill where the observatory stands. Beside this building, to the east, is a mound of earth rising about twenty feet. This is the highest ground for miles around, and from it a splendid view could be had of the country. As we stood facing the north, the length of Finland, and all was quiet, we being alone, President Lyman decided that there was the proper place to offer prayer. Behind us on the mound, a little building was being reared, but the workmen were absent. We took off our hats, but remained standing.

After expressing gratitude for our safe arrival and for the

peace and blessings that were with us, President Lyman besought the Lord in behalf of Finland and its people. He prayed that this sturdy race might never be crushed or subjected to tyranny, but that the people might ever have liberty to worship the Lord. He prayed for the government, that the officers might be just and merciful, that they might feel kindly toward the people and toward the servants of the Lord when they come to preach the gospel. He prayed for the land, that it might be productive and support its inhabitants. He asked that the Spirit of the Lord might be poured out upon the people that they might hunger for the truth, and with the authority of the Priesthood, he turned the key and opened the door for the preaching of the gospel in Finland, and dedicated the land for this work. He besought the Lord to bless the people with faith, that true servants and prophets might soon be raised up among them. The cause of Zion and the servants of the Lord were all remembered, and the blessings and favor of heaven were prayed for them.

The prayer was inspired and inspiring, and we felt that the Lord had heard it and acknowledged the dedication of the land. When we were through, we found that the laborers had returned and were looking with wondering eyes at the two bare-headed men who spoke in a strange language.

The Finnish people are a strongly-built, hardy folk, not very tall, but with well-knit bodies. They are somewhat swarthy, but a majority have blue eyes and fair hair. In the real Finns there is often a slight Mongolian caste in the countenance; and this can well be, for they sprang originally from the same stock as the Hungarians and Turks, but like these people they have undergone great changes with time. There has been a great admixture of Scandinavian and Germanic blood. Certainly there is much of the blood of Israel in their veins. They are not related to the Russians particularly, and their language is entirely different from the Slavonic tongues. Way back in time, St. Erick came over from Sweden, and after defeating the Finns with great slaughter he had the survivors baptized. Thus the Christian faith was planted among them. When the wave of Protestantism swept over the northern peoples of western Europe, Finland adopted the Lutheran religion and has retained it up to the present.

Hard times and Russian rule are driving thousands of Finns to America. There is a tone of sadness in all they say concerning their present humbled condition. The loss of their soldiery and flag, the things so dear to the liberty loving Finns, the themes of their great poet Runeberg, is not easy to bear.

May the time soon come when they will open their hearts and receive the gospel of the Lord. The truth will make them free indeed.—*Millennial Star*.

[A note from Elder Cannon, dated St. Petersburg, July 25, (August 7, new) 1903, sends greetings to the ERA from President Lyman and himself, and conveys the information that on the day previous, President Lyman offered prayer for the land of Russia.—Editors.]

TELL HIM SO.

If you have a word of cheer
That may light the pathway drear
Of a brother pilgrim here,

Let him know.

Show him you appreciate
What he does; and do not wait
Till the heavy hand of Fate

Lays him low.

If your heart contains a thought
That will brighter make his lot,
Then in mercy, hide it not;

Tell him so.

Wait not till your friend is dead
Ere your compliments are said:
For the spirit that has fled,

If it know,

Does not need to speed it on
Our poor praise; where it has gone
Love's eternal, golden dawn

Is aglow.

But unto our brother here
That your praise is very dear;
If you've any word of cheer

Tell him so.

—*Good Health.*

TALKS TO YOUNG MEN.

XII.—CALLED ON A MISSION.

There comes a time in the life of nearly every young man in the Church when he is called on a mission. It is a new experience, and only the young man who receives the message can form an idea of the peculiar sensations that stir the soul when the call is made. If the young man is faithful only one thought is uppermost in his mind:

"I will go, but am I prepared?"

The message doubtless comes to different people in a different way, and no two young men feel just the same emotions when the summons comes. But it is safe to say that the first thought is to confide the news to father or mother, or a dear friend who can sympathize with the feelings, and, perhaps, impart valuable counsel as a guide upon the untrodden way. A letter from a father who was in England on a business trip, in 1896, when his son received a missionary call, has come to the writer's notice, and it so brims with good advice, that it is worthy the study of other sons who are called on missions; it is therefore presented here in full:

MY DEAR SON: ———

I have learned that you have been called upon a mission to Germany, to preach the gospel, and the knowledge of that fact fills me with mingled feelings of pleasure and solicitude.

One of the most responsible positions, and at the same time one of the greatest privileges, that can be conferred upon a man in this world, is to be chosen and set apart as a servant of the Most High God, to bear his holy priesthood, and to carry his gos-

pel of salvation to the nations of the earth. And it is my most earnest and prayerful desire to impress you with the vast importance and sacredness of the position to which you have been called—that of a holy minister and a mouth-piece of God to the people of the earth; with authority from on high to minister in the ordinances of his everlasting gospel.

If you accept this position, realizing its importance, with a firm determination to prayerfully and humbly magnify your calling as God shall give you strength, you will be astonished and overjoyed at the power of God which will accompany you and sustain you in every position in which you may be placed; and you will be enabled to overcome and surmount every obstacle that may lie in your pathway; and fill your mission to the honor and glory of God, to the salvation of souls, and to your eternal joy and benefit.

In order to perform your mission to the approval of God and to your own satisfaction and credit, it is your bounden duty, and God expects of you, that you will improve every opportunity to store your mind with useful knowledge to qualify you for your high and holy calling, and if you will do this and look to him with a pure and prayerful heart, his Holy Spirit and his power will rest upon you to an extent that you never dreamed of. But remember, my boy, that the express mission of the Holy Spirit is to “bring things past to your *remembrance*” (which you have previously learned or heard) at the time they are needed; to assist you in acquiring knowledge, and to enable you to discern between truth and error; “and to show you things to come,” but it is not its mission to impart to you knowledge which it is your duty, and within your power to obtain by study and application.

Now, my son, you were born under the “Everlasting Covenant;” an heir of right to the holy priesthood; you are blessed with a strong, healthy and powerful physical body and constitution; you have been taught correct principles from your earliest youth; I believe you to be strictly moral, and to have acquired no bad habits, except that of slackness and indifference to study, and, possibly, too much of a disposition to idle and waste your time, and for which I am not disposed to censure you too severely, knowing, as I do, the natural disposition and inclination of youth to seek for pastime and pleasures. But now, standing as you are

upon the very threshold of life and manhood, endowed with all the advantages and blessings I have enumerated, God has called you into his service, and I entreat of you, my son, with all the earnestness of a father whose sole desires on your behalf are for your present and eternal happiness and welfare, that you will put aside all frivolity and carelessness, and from this time forth devote your time and energies and your talents to the acquirement of useful knowledge, to be used in the spread of righteousness and truth upon the earth, to the salvation of mankind and the glory of God.

And in doing this, I promise you in the name of Jesus, you will have more peace, more satisfaction, pleasure and joy, than you could possibly obtain by any other course; in addition to which you will be loved, respected and honored by the pure and upright in this life, and will secure exaltation and eternal life in God's presence in the world to come.

I have met many of our young missionaries since I have been here, all of whom are feeling well, and are zealous in doing all the good they can, but they all regret that they did not better improve their opportunities of obtaining knowledge before coming here, for they now keenly realize the vital importance of it. So let me once more urge upon you, my dear son, to improve every moment between now and the time you start in qualifying yourself for your mission.

I will be at home before you start, but in the meantime remember you are the only man at home. Your mother has a great deal to see to in my absence, and much to worry her. Try to make her task as light as possible, and try to gladden her heart by carrying out her every wish with cheerfulness and pleasure.

And now, with reference once more to your mission:—While it is a trial for me to part with you for a time, so far as I have a claim upon you, I freely surrender and dedicate you to the service of God; and I bestow upon you a father's choicest blessing, and assure you of his constant prayers for your present, your future and eternal welfare.

Go, my son, upon your mission. Do your duty, and magnify your calling as a man of God, and *God be with you.*

Your loving father, ——

SOME LEADING EVENTS IN THE CURRENT STORY OF THE WORLD.

BY DR. J. M. TANNER, SUPERINTENDENT OF CHURCH SCHOOLS.

The American Vice-Consul at Beirut.

On the evening of the 27th day of August while Vice-Consul Magelssen, at Beirut, was riding in a Carriage through the streets of that city, a shot was fired, whether at him or into the sky, by a party returning from a marriage festival, in a moment of glee, is not known. Unfortunately, by a mistake in the cablegram sent from Beirut to Constantinople, our minister there made a mistake in deciphering the message, and cabled our government here that Vice Consul Magelssen had been assassinated in the streets of Beirut. The United States government at once ordered two of its battleships to the port of Beirut for the purpose of obtaining redress, and of giving security to the Americans in that city. When it was found that Magelssen had not been assassinated, and that it was not even certain that he had been shot at, the President and Secretary of State were very much annoyed at the blunder that had precipitated their action. The Americans insist on taking that version of the affair that will best justify our action in sending warships to the coast of Syria, and therefore adopt the view that the Vice-Consul was at least shot at. There was no uprising at Beirut, and the revolution going on in Macedonia had no influence whatever upon the people of that Turkish seaport town.

The Mohammedans at Beirut are Arabs, with the exception of a few officials who are Turks. But Beirut is, perhaps, infected more by criminal classes than any other seaport about the Mediterranean. The influence of the Christian element upon the Arabs seems to be worse than upon the Turks. The Turks simply remain

aloof from Christians, and will have absolutely nothing to do with them, and it is, therefore, extremely rare that a Turk becomes a member of any of the Protestant churches. It is different, however, with the Arabs, many of whom become Christians for a very small consideration. That they are bought into Christianity in scores of instances is well known, and is a scandal upon missionary methods. Then many of the Arabs imitate that which is basest in the Christian world, and become the worst sort of renegades. The criminal element in Beirut is, perhaps, nearly if not quite as bad as it is in the slums of Liverpool, Glasgow, New York, or Chicago; and there are scores of Arabs in Beirut who would quickly kill a man for a few dollars if there were any hope of escape. The Arab boatmen of this place are particularly bad.

Besides the degenerate element at Beirut, there has been some trouble between the American officials there and the Mohammedans. The Americans have a college at Beirut, and there is a large colony of Americans and converted Arab Moslems. Numbers of the Mohammedans and Armenians come to the United States where they are naturalized and become full-fledged American citizens. Many of them return to Syria and land at Beirut, the principal seaport. Some of these Mohammedan Americans belong to the criminal element. On their return, they sometimes commit crimes, and the Turkish government would like the privilege of punishing them, but by terms of our treaty with Turkey, American citizens who commit crimes against the laws of Turkey must be tried by American consular courts. The better informed classes understand the treaty arrangements, and yield with as much grace as they can muster; the more ignorant and violent classes resent them, and not only hate the treaty arrangements, but also our representatives who are there to enforce them.

Sometimes the officials at Beirut object to the landing of these Mohammedan Americans on their return to Beirut, because perhaps of some aggravating circumstance associated with these naturalized Americans before they left Turkey. Sometimes the Turks claim that they have left the country with taxes standing against them unpaid, and undertake to enforce the payment of obligations that were due to the Turkish government before they became Americans. These difficulties always lead to contentions

between our consuls and the Turkish officials, and Beirut is the chief center of these contentions. In the very nature of things, Vice-Consul Magelssen in the discharge of his duties would have to engage in many controversies, and thereby create more or less personal enmity against himself. The Americans are, perhaps, stronger and more influential at Beirut than at any other Turkish seaport. From Beirut, a railroad is built to Damascus where the Arabs of the south and the Turks of the north bring their products from the interior of Asiatic Turkey.

Lord Salisbury.

In Lord Salisbury, England has lost the last of her great Victorian statesmen. From the time he entered the House of Commons, in 1854, he has commanded the attention, though not the applause of his countrymen. He was a man whose strength was due to his ability, for he never sought popularity, and was apparently very indifferent to the popular applause upon which statesmen so frequently feed. In his manners and habits, he was shy and reticent; however, it was easy for him to detect the shams or pretensions of others. Before he came to the premiership, he was often a free lance, being pugnacious and often aggressive towards foreign countries whose policy was at variance with the interests of Great Britain. The supreme responsibilities which the highest office in the gift of his country imposed upon him had a sobering and softening influence upon his later years.

Lord Salisbury was always popular with the Queen who found him much more congenial than Gladstone had been. At heart, Salisbury was aristocratic, and the extensions of manhood suffrage was at variance with his own preconceived notions. His domestic life, though he married against the wishes of his father, was happily lived and as happily ended. His last days were devoted to his favorite study of chemistry which he pursued with interest through his long political career.

His relations with this country never bore evidences of displeasure, though he never sympathized with our democratic institutions, which he distrusted more or less. He doubtlessly realized, however, that the best interests of England would be promoted by cultivating cordial relations. When Mr. Cleveland issued a

message against England on the Venezuelan question, Lord Salisbury forbore resentment; and when the Spanish-American war broke out, he informed the continental powers of Europe that England would permit no interference. So much of Lord Salisbury's life was known only to his intimate friends, that the world at large has really not known much of the man.

The Revolution in Macedonia.

The revolution which began in Macedonia a month ago, in small and insignificant skirmishes, and by acts of anarchy committed by the Bulgarians in dynamiting public buildings, railroads, and Turkish quarters, has been constantly gaining in force and extent until now it is spread throughout the whole of Macedonia. The reports that come from the country must be taken with great allowance. In the first place, they are chiefly from the revolutionists who are holding up the horrors of the Turks to the execration of the Christian world. Not the half of these reports are true. Readers of the newspapers, no doubt, often wonder why the Great Powers do not intercede; but the governments of the Great Powers have a different sort of information from that disseminated by the public press, and they know more accurately the real facts.

The *Literary Digest* says: "If half the reports from there [Macedonia] are true, we can have the unpleasant assurance that there is not an hour when the smoke of some village is not rising to the sky mingled with the cries of its dying inhabitants." Of course, the *Literary Digest* does not believe half that is sent out in the reports; besides, these reports make it appear that the barbarous and horrible conduct of the revolution is all on the side of the Turks. The *New York Tribune* furnishes the following statement which permits the Christian world to see a little of the other side of the picture. It is as follows:

Krushevo was a beautiful, prosperous, and peaceful town. It was inhabited by only a few Bulgars, and they were the poorer part of the people. The great majority, and practically all the well-to-do, were Wallachs, who are radically different from the Bulgars in race and religion. It was really a Wallachian town. It was not concerned in the insurrection, and had little or no sympathy with it. The Bulgarian in-

surgents regarded it as a rich place for plunder and one the seizure of which would especially exasperate the government. So the Macedonian committee organized an attack upon it by a party of Bulgars and captured it. They then massacred a number of the chief citizens—not Turks, but Christian Wallachs—and levied wholesale blackmail upon the survivors. A Turkish force was sent to recapture the place. Before attacking it, the Turkish commander offered to let the women and children depart out of harm's way. This the Bulgars refused to permit, insisting that the Wallachian women and children, some of whose husbands and fathers they had murdered, and most of whom they had robbed, should remain to share the fortunes of war. Then, when the Turkish attack became hot, the Bulgars sneaked away and took to the woods, leaving the women and children to their fate. That fate was unspeakably horrible. The Turkish soldiers, infuriated at the escape of their foes, and having the lust of slaughter fully aroused, ravished and plundered and slaughtered at will.

Now, it is impossible to find excuses for such conduct on the part of the Turks. No language can too strongly express the horror and detestation of it which the whole civilized world should feel. But, then, neither is the conduct of the Bulgars to be condoned. It was cowardly, savage, and criminal in the extreme. In order to promote their campaign against the Turks, the Bulgars attacked the Wallachian town, massacred and plundered its people, and then delivered its women and children over to the wrath of the Turks. That is the sort of thing that justly alienates the sympathies of the world from the Bulgars, and demonstrates the necessity of some other than Bulgarian rule in Macedonia as a substitute for Turkish misrule.

Generally the newspapers of the United States are holding up the Turks as exclusively blameworthy, and urge the interference of the Great Powers. If one were to read today the German newspapers, one would get a wholly different impression from what is conveyed by reading American newspapers. The Americans are largely governed by the reports of American missionaries in Turkey, whose hatred of that country is often so violent that their reports are practically worthless to one desiring a knowledge of the real situation. I have often heard merchants and travelers in Turkey say that if Turkish missionaries came to the United States and conducted themselves in this country as American missionaries do in Turkey, we would banish them all within twenty-four hours. Of course, this is an extreme statement on

the other side; but it is certainly true that the information afforded us through the medium of the American press is not wholly reliable. If half of what has been said against Turkey were true, the Great Powers would, of course, have interfered long ago.

At this time, it may appear a little amazing to many that the Greeks, a Christian nation of south-eastern Europe, are really lifting their voices in Christian prayer for the success of the Turks. Servia and Roumania would both prefer to see the Turks rule in Macedonia than to have it become a part of Bulgaria. Certainly life and peace are at no higher premium in either Bulgaria or Servia than in Macedonia, a Turkish province, and both would be more valuable in Macedonia than either of the other two countries, were it not for Christian revolutionists.

The Turkish government is sluggish and corrupt, and the Turk is unprogressive. But if the Turks shall not be permitted to rule Macedonia, what country shall rule it? Self rule would mean constant civil strife and anarchy. Austria has all the hot pokers in her hand that she can carry. No Protestant nation would like to see Russia take Macedonia. And as long as the country cannot be made an acceptable and desirable gift to anybody, what shall become of it? After all, the question is a puzzle, and the practical diplomats of Europe are aware of that fact. Newspapers, however, would solve the difficulty in short order.

Affairs in Congo Free State.

In view of what is going on in the Congo Free State, the word "free" is a travesty on human rights. In 1885, representatives of the Great Powers in Europe met at Berlin and created out of a district of country along the Congo River, having an area of about nine hundred thousand square miles, a state free from the control of any of the Great Powers, and put it under the government of the king of Belgium, but made the government an absolute monarchy. The object, also, of this action was to stop the slave trade carried on by the Arabs in the western-central portion of Africa. The country is governed at Brussels through a foreign minister who rules by means of under secretaries. The Congo Free State, however, has a local capital at Boma, about fifty miles from the mouth of the Congo River. The country of

the upper Congo is populated by millions of the negro race, and it is one of the chief sources of our ivory and rubber.

In order to carry on the government of the Congo Free State, it became necessary, of course, to raise revenue; and the Belgian government, therefore, farmed out the chief industries to large corporations that were enabled to carry on their business through the aid of the Belgian government, that provided negro soldiers for the purpose of subserving the interests of these corporations. In the first place, the government at Brussels declared about nine-tenths of all the land to be crown lands, and sold to the various companies monopolies, the government retaining one-half of the profits.

Owing to the tropical heat of central Africa, it is an undesirable abode for the white man, and there are perhaps not more than three thousand whites in all the Congo Free State. However, an army of about twelve thousand blacks was organized and put under the control of Belgian officers. Many of these black soldiers are cannibals, and their regard for human life is no protection whatever to the unfortunate villagers they dominate. As an example of how things have been going on for some time, in that part of the world, the rubber industry furnishes an illustration. A district of the Congo Free State is set apart to a rubber company. The rubber must be gathered, and the natives are required to do the work. But the natives regard the country as their own, and do not see why they should be sent out by some foreign corporation to gather rubber, unless they want to. The negro soldiers, therefore, surround the villages, and call out the entire male population to hunt rubber. If the villagers refuse, death is certain. The villagers are provided with baskets, which must be filled and returned to the government posts, where some trifling trinket is given as remuneration. If the natives bring too little rubber in their basket, it is said they are sometimes killed, and even eaten by the black cannibal soldiers.

Recently, the British minister of foreign affairs has notified the Belgian government that Great Britain objects to the granting of these monopolies, and insists that forced labor be done away with, and other evils in the Congo Free State be abandoned. The poor negro there is in an as apparently unfortunate condition

as when hunted by the Arab slave trader. A Mr. Canisius describes conditions, as he found them at a trading post of the Mongalla rubber trust, among a tribe known as the Gombes, as follows:

Once in a fortnight these Gombes were obliged to bring rubber to the post. Each of these villages were under the surveillance of a "capita," or headman, sent by the post manager, whose duty it was to see that the natives gathered the rubber in time, and in proper quantity.

At the time appointed, the post manager notified the "capitas" to bring in the rubber gathered by the villagers under their control, and in due course they arrived at the station, each man carrying a small basket made of rattan, furnished by the white agent, in order that no native could make a mistake as to the quantity he must furnish.

When all the villagers had arrived at the station, they took up their position in rows, and the post manager then settled down to business assisted by the company's "soldiers," a number of whom were stationed at every post. Each villager was in turn ranged up before him, every man with his basket before him. Each native wore, attached to a cord around his neck, a small disc made of the zinc lining of packing cases. These discs each had a number stamped upon it, and in a book which the manager had before him was inscribed the names of the natives against the number upon their "tags." One by one, the half frightened bushmen were called up and made to present their baskets to the white man, a proceeding frequently assisted by a cuff from one of the soldiers. If the quantity of rubber was satisfactory, the native—who had worked many days to procure it—was paid what the agent thought was the proper amount in "mitakos," pieces of brass wire, six to eight inches long. If, on the other hand, the native had only a small quantity of rubber in his basket, he was taken aside by one of the soldiers, and, after all had been called up, was severely castigated with the fearful whip made of hippopotamus hide.

When all the villagers had deposited their quotas of rubber, the manager had a thousand pounds, or more, which I estimated cost him at the rate of about one penny per pound. As this rubber was worth over three shillings per pound in the Antwerp market, it is safe to assume that the company made a very considerable profit on it, even after paying heavy transport charges and a high export tax.

All this the Belgian government is directly and indirectly responsible for. If Belgium were not a Christian nation, the Christian world would take her to task for her barbarous treatment of the Gombes and other negro tribes of central Africa, pro-

vided the Gombes had first been converted to Christianity. It is to be hoped that Great Britain will persist in her determination to correct these abuses until something is accomplished.

A Very Satisfactory Showing.

In view of the large investments in Mexico by American capitalists, it is gratifying to observe the growth of United States commerce with our neighbor on the south. Mexico is making wonderful strides in developing the resources of that country; the revenues there have trebled in the last twenty years, and foreign commerce has more than quadrupled, and now amounts to about \$130,000,000 a year. Many years ago England supplied Mexico with more than two-thirds of her imports, and while England today sends about the same amount of goods to Mexico, she has not increased her exports to that country, as the United States has done.

The following table illustrates the steady but rapid increase of exports from this country and gives a comparison between England and the United States that is altogether favorable to us:

	From England	From the United States
1898.....	\$8,750,000.....	\$19,000,000
1899.....	10,000,000	23,000,000
1900.....	10,000,000.....	29,000,000
1901.....	7,500,000.....	29,000,000
1902.....	8,000,000.....	40,000,000

We are also increasing our exports in Canada, and the following table furnishes a comparison between the United States and Great Britain:

	From England	From the United States
1898.....	\$32,500,000.....	\$ 78,700,000
1899.....	37,000,000.....	93,000,000
1900.....	44,750,000.....	110,000,000
1901.....	43,000,000.....	110,500,000
1902.....	49,000,000.....	120,800,000

The fact that the north-west is now receiving so many emigrants from the United States will do much to improve further the trade relations between this country and Canada.

Still Wonderful.

The discovery and inventions of wireless telegraphy seemed the most wonderful in the history of the world, and it continues to be a source of marvel and wonderment. Marconi, the great Italian inventor, recently landed in the United States from Queens-town. During the entire voyage, he was in constant communication on board ship with the United States and England. The yacht races, at the time, invited universal attention, both here and in Great Britain, and the results of the races were posted on the bulletin board of the steamer the morning following the contest.

Mr. Marconi announces that he has come to this country to talk with Mr. Edison about some new inventions that he has made to improve his wireless telegraphic system. One of them, he declares, will revolutionize the system and make it a commercial success throughout the world. It is all still a wonder. A chapter of modern history read at the beginning of the last century would have been more marvelous than anything the world had ever known.

Not so Bad.

Not least among the objections to the acquisition of territories not contiguous to the United States was the large expense which it was believed such territories would impose upon this country without giving to the United States any adequate compensation by way of trade relations. Now that our recent possessions are settling down to the stabler conditions of peace and commerce, we are permitted to gain some definite knowledge of our commercial relations with them.

The Department of Commerce and Labor through its Bureau of Statistics has given our commerce with these territories for the eleven months of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1903. The total commerce with Porto Rico, and Hawaii, the Philippines and Alaska, for eleven months amounted to little more than \$90,000,000. The twelve months would easily, therefore, render a total commerce between us and them of \$100,000,000 during the first uninterrupted year of our trade. We sent to them during the eleven months thirty millions and they sent to us, including four and one-half millions of gold from Alaska, nearly fifty-eight millions.

It is interesting to know that every dollar's worth of our trade with Alaska was carried on in American vessels. Alaska sent us in fish alone during the eleven months \$9,200,000. This is two millions more than we paid for Alaska thirty years ago. Such commercial relations are highly encouraging; and whether or not our political institutions shall suffer as a consequence of the annexation of foreign territories, it is gratifying to learn that they are not likely to be so much of a financial burden as many feared they would be.

The report says that only one per cent of what we sent to the Philippines, and only one-fourth of what those islands sent to us was carried in American vessels. The acquisition of these islands will undoubtedly have a strong influence in creating a supply of American vessels with which to carry on commerce between this and foreign countries.

The Trackless Trolley.

Sometime ago, it was reported that experiments were under way in Germany looking to the establishment of the trackless trolley. It is now announced that such a system is in full operation near Dresden. In the new system, it has been found unnecessary to have such a track of steel rails to run upon as is used in this country. The common highway is sufficient for the purpose, and the cars turn to one side on their way to permit approaching vehicles to pass by. It is said that the new system is a perfect success, and has the advantage over the steel rail trolley system in that it can be operated much more cheaply. The cars are described as a sort of omnibus used for carrying passengers. Then there are freight cars used for the transportation of freight. The wire through which the motor power is carried runs over head, and there are projecting poles which extend upward, and at the end of which is a wheel that runs along the wire in the ordinary fashion. It is said that the average speed of these cars is from nine to twelve miles an hour. It is believed that the new trackless trolley will not only prove much more effectual in suburban traffic, but that it may be also extended into many places where the patronage would not justify the expense of the ordinary system. It is delightful to experience the contributions of invention to the welfare and progress of man.

STATISTICAL REPORT OF THE Y. M. M. I. A.

STAKE.	MEMBERSHIP.							Number in Stake between Ages of 14 and 45, Not Enrolled.	MEETINGS.	
	Graded.	Number of Associations in Stake.	Number of Members Enrolled.	Number Enrolled Members Away from Home Attending School.	Number Enrolled Members on Missions.	Number Enrolled Members Lawfully Excused for Other Reasons.	Average Attendance.		Officers' Meetings.	Regular Weekly Meetings.
Alberta, East....	2	5	270	4	4	14	137	85	24	113
Alberta, West....	2	8	234	7	7	8	105	36	33	110
Alpine.....	7	14	775	38	28	39	301	635	132	297
Bannock.....	3	12	350	3	14	16	178	77	83	222
Bear Lake.....	12	19	1091	63	12	92	522	193	83	309
Beaver.....		7	348	7	5	17	181		58	148
Benson.....	6	8	548	25	18	19	188	93	41	147
Big Horn.....	2	5	286	3	7	33	121	50	36	91
Bingham.....		24	539	6	6	19	247	147	30	231
Box Elder.....	12	19	1068	45	53	68	239	190	149	389
Cache.....	9	11	776	8	35	29	318	170	133	208
Cassta.....	4	11	446	14	15	95	191	80	79	245
Davis, South....	4	7	485	22	15	18	33	74	37	146
Davis, North....	4	7	388	20	23	29	152	37	61	135
Emery.....	6	8	354	5	8	24	158	225	9	128
Fremont.....	7	18	645	14	27	19	287	264	90	251
Granite.....	16	17	1040	12	32	101	451	400	63	375
Hyrum.....	8	10	661	32	23	171	300	309	40	197
Jordan.....		12	720	29	24	71	283	206	55	251
Juab.....		7	563	11	4	19	301	228	97	223
Juarez.....	5	8	662	12	8	63	263	24	55	177
Kanab.....	2	5	274	27	8	35	132	43	31	110
Malad.....		11	456	21	9	5	186	146	30	199
Maricopa.....	3	5	206	9	6	16	78	84	35	106
Millard.....	5	11	468	24	8	33	261	46	38	175
Morgan.....	3	7	256	15	8	10	115	28	16	125
Nebo.....	9	15	1054	34	27		25	246	78	314
North Sanpete..	4	11	722	35	20	60	290	450	44	214
Onelda.....	4	20	757	26	37	60	375	92	120	327
Panguitch.....	2	10	240	21	8	35	85	18	7	61
Parowan.....	3	6	371	35	16	32	145	51	31	104
Pocatello.....	6	11	340	12	7	21	163	135	23	180
St. George.....	3	21	473	29	31	60	243	161	86	304
St. Johns.....	7	9	323	20	9	68	109	28	51	154
St. Joseph.....	5	12	471	10	3	46	225	91	30	230
Salt Lake.....	31	38	2356	9	125	143	944	363	321	868
San Juan.....	1	6	196	4	6	8	102	33	15	80
San Luis.....	2	4	305	15	3	38	112	38	35	80
Sevier.....	9	16	815	52	31	56	357	190	29	212
Snowflake.....	3	6	221	8	9	17	114	45		118
South Sanpete..	7	10	542	23	17	61	235	400	60	217
Star Valley.....	8	9	410	24	17	42	175	86	26	193
Summit.....	2	16	520	30	25	76	240	150	74	334
Teton.....	1	10	250	15	6	15	96	74	15	154
Tooele.....	3	9	635	25	23	72	148	57	28	194
Uintah.....	4	5	319	4	8	27	130		37	110
Union.....	4	6	234	6	7	9	134	40	52	111
Utah.....	18	18	796	27	34	41	342	226	55	409
Wasatch.....	9	9	594	20	29	35	195	84	30	136
Wayne.....	2	12	309	6	12	9	180	19	51	164
Weber.....	8	25	2101	70	101	177	568	148	295	514
Woodruff.....		8	280	10	8	62	13	114	47	159
TOTALS, -	277	598	29573	1046	1026	2335	11467	7209	3178	11037

FOR THE YEAR ENDING APRIL 30th, 1903.

MEETINGS.							EXERCISES.					MISSION-ARY LABORS.	
Joint Officers' Meetings.	Monthly Joint Meetings.	Extra and Special.	District Conferences.	Semi-Annual Conferences.	Public Lectures.	Total Meetings.	Lessons from Manual on Principles of the Gospel Part 2.	No. of Manual Lessons Completed.	Home Preparations.	No. of Miscellaneous Exercises.	Review Questions Answered.	Visits of General and Stake Officers.	No. Local Missionaries Called.
17	39	26	2	1	2	224	183	14	176	218	1117	18	12
6	30	4	8		3	194	212	12	518	108		26	20
87	111	20		2	41	680	302	18	599	279	3356	73	20
67	66	13	2	2		455	444	15	235	236	3291	111	11
64	120	14	6	1	5	602	59	17	529	486	9314	58	34
24	30	23	4	2	9	298	216	20	305	240	3026	41	14
34	52		1	1	11	285	294	23	470	60	2208	24	19
15	18	8		2	1	171	311	17	338	141	1867	30	10
33	83	4	4	2	41	428	323	9	108	138	2700	24	11
12	106	14		1	6	677	610	23				71	25
41	69	4		2	3	460	459	21	390	206	1780	44	11
11	52	5		2		394	402	20	1047	177		40	26
18	48	16		1	11	277	21	21	1022	19		33	23
11	39	3		2	2	253	416	18	443	179	2528	18	9
11	35	6		2	3	194	180	15	50	159	1741	4	10
18	81	13	7	2	13	475	813	16	300	190	3592	53	39
76	141	7		2	51	715	1415	23	3790	506	10073	115	56
33	104	4		2		380	473	23	1965	353	4267	89	14
29	54	17		2	17	425	300	20	405	242	3383	50	18
9	18	5	4	2	9	367	218	23	254	97	1970	25	
54	77	20		2	12	397	490	23	2352	198		34	16
16	31	1		2	1	192	144	24	353	230		9	8
12	42	10		2	5	300	192	17	193	64		29	10
9	13	4		2		169	122	20	150	75		61	9
13	21	17			4	268	194	14	628	211		19	17
	40	4		1	4	190	75	9	230			24	4
59	114	12		2	14	593	1125	20	628			63	39
38	60	6		2	30	394	636	23	1132	380	4954	60	39
33	48	25	4	2	14	573	321	16	2233	3331	3427	60	25
3	39	1		1	29	141	58	18		98		2	12
24	38	8		2	12	219	81	20	120	8		38	6
8	32	3		2	2	250	348	13	149	208	1280	22	
22	56	21	4		55	548	208	23	509	237	1927	40	23
20	30	19			27	301	248	16	567	135		13	4
29	39	4		2	7	341		15	689	58	3080	64	19
162	348	20			71	1790	1056	22	6155	729	3986	600	106
31	10	6		2		144	349	14	507	178	984	9	8
5	31	3		3		157	302	24	631	147	1321	138	10
25	74	13		1	19	373	195	12	1096	142	4214	7	9
29	12	4				163	302	19	437	210	2392	23	6
50	76	3	4	1	18	429	206	20	441	251		52	10
8	40	17	1	1	1	287	561	23	610	221	4841	20	30
60	50	40		2	21	611	581	20	300	479		85	32
10	9	10	4	1	3	206		14	812	123	1974	35	20
9	34	10		2		277	374	19	1026	390	3983	50	14
21	18	1	2	1	3	193	370	20	268	238	2380	15	17
9	22	1		1	2	198	172	23	321	150	2044	24	2
84	148		1	2	36	735	625	13	1950	350	2627	62	33
10	27	3	3	2	3	214	273	15	457	162	885	15	17
15	31	15	4	2		282	296	10	691	205	1662	33	10
15	164	22		2	51	1063	2163	23	4666	562	13726	122	50
22	55	3				286	355	19	142	139	1027	16	2
1521	3155	532	65	78	672	20238	20573	949	43387	13923	118,917	2791	989

EDITOR'S TABLE.

CLOSE OF VOLUME VI—PROSPECTUS VOLUME VII.

With this number, the IMPROVEMENT ERA closes its sixth volume. We will be pardoned, in looking over the achievements of the magazine for the past six years, for the spirit of thankfulness and gratification that we feel in the success that has been attained in its publication, both in a literary and a financial way. From the many testimonials that we have received, from home readers and from abroad, we are convinced that the efforts which have been put forth in the publication of this work have met with great favor among the people; and not only that, but that the ERA has accomplished much good in the spreading of the truths of the gospel, as well as in aiding the young people to better perform their journey of life, and in inspiring them to better works.

We urge upon our subscribers, and upon the public generally, to renew their subscriptions immediately to Volume VII, upon the blanks that will be sent them, and also ask the officers to use energetic efforts to obtain new subscribers. By a glance at the prospectus which is found in this number, and which gives in detail something about the magazine and the special features of Volume VII, the reader will be convinced, as we are, that the coming volume will be among the most interesting that have been published, and he will be inspired with the desire not only to continue his own subscription, but to obtain other subscribers to help the good work along.

It is the aim of the General Board to make the ERA a suitable and lively exponent of the Mutual Improvement cause among the young people of Zion, and in addition to provide reading matter

that will instruct, inspire and entertain both old and young the world over.

We cannot close without congratulating the officers of our associations, and the young men everywhere in our Church, upon the splendid loyalty which they have manifested towards our enterprise, and assure them that it is highly appreciated. In this connection we ask them to rally to the assistance of Volume VII with such strong efforts as shall insure an increased subscription list, which means the continued improvement and success of our magazine. The ERA is not a private enterprise, but belongs entirely to the young men, and for that reason every young man should take pride in adding his efforts to assist in its publication and circulation.

In expressing our gratitude to the officers and to the young men for their past assistance, and in asking their loyal support for the future, we cannot but feel grateful to the Lord for the prosperity that has attended the efforts of the Mutual Improvement Associations in the publication of this work. We are confident that the ERA has been an instrument for good, a benefit to the Church, and a means for the religious, moral, and educational advancement of the youth of Zion, as well as a staunch exponent of the truth in all the world.

We ask your assistance for the future, and when you consider the thousands that we have upon our lists as subscribers, you can readily see how you may aid the work by immediately forwarding your subscription without waiting for further solicitation from anyone.

THE MANUAL FOR 1903-1904.

A review of the contents of the M. I. A. Manual for 1903-1904 has already appeared in the ERA, but a few additional remarks concerning it will not be out of place. It consists, this season, of over two hundred pages of reading matter, and makes a book which under ordinary circumstances would sell for a very much higher price than 50 cents. The General Board, desiring to be as liberal as possible to the members of our Improvement

Associations, and to subscribers of the ERA, have decided to sell the manual, as usual, to members for 25 cents, and to give it free to subscribers to the ERA. To all others who are not members of the associations, the price will be 50 cents. The members, therefore, get the Manual at a very low figure: in fact, it would be impossible to furnish it at such a price without printing a great number, and it is even now furnished below cost. The author's companion volume "A New Witness for God," costs \$1.50.

The brethren should appreciate this extremely low price, and seek to obtain as wide a circulation for the book as possible, not only on account of its cheapness but because of the intrinsic value of its contents. It should be the aim of our officers this season to create enthusiasm in the young men upon the subject of which the manual treats; namely, the Book of Mormon. At the close of our season, let it be said that thousands of young men have received a testimony of the divinity of the Book of Mormon, as well as a knowledge that its origin and coming forth was by divine inspiration.

One other word in regard to the ordering of the manual. Its great bulk makes the postage very high, each number costing 6 cents by mail. The officers will therefore see the necessity of ordering only as many as they think they can conveniently dispose of, so as to avoid postage in sending and returning, which would amount to half the price of the manual.

We think that the officers and members of our associations should appreciate the efforts of the General Board in providing them with a treatise of this class. It is the first time that anything of the kind upon the Book of Mormon has been presented, in the Church, and it deals entirely in a new and interesting way with the subject. The student of the Book of Mormon will find deep interest in the treatise, and we hope to record, at the end of the year, that an increased interest in the Book of Mormon is noticeable among the young people.

THE SPIRIT OF RELIGION.

You have noticed how indifferent some young men are about attending meetings. You have observed, too, how careless

about the same matter some of the middle-aged are; and last, you have experienced a personal apathy on this subject that has often convinced you that it was better to go to the meadows or the woods than to endure two hours of dry church services as they seem to you.

There are reasons for this apathetic feeling about attending meetings. The first cause is, perhaps, a breakdown of the traditional obligation to attend, which earlier in the Church was rightly set down and considered as a duty. In fact, not many years ago, a member who failed to attend his meetings was often severely criticised by his teachers and bishop, and even considered to be a backslider. This feeling, which is a true one and which it were well could be perpetuated among the Saints, does not now as strongly exist, but rather in its stead are creeping in the thoughts and feelings that if certain other duties are performed, one may well stay away from religious services without losing caste with the Church or its officers. Of course, this means that those who go to meeting are those who want to go, and they are there in spite of temptations and influences to go elsewhere.

A second cause, closely connected with the first mentioned, is the great increase in the number and variety of Sunday amusements: the lake, the canyons, the music halls, country buggy or carriage drives and visits, in the summer; and in winter, parties, socials, entertainments, which, while perhaps not held on Sunday among us, are yet a source of detraction from church because of the time and pleasure which they occupy and provide. In this connection, you have noticed how time for diversion and amusement can always be found by people who can find no time for religious worship. I have before mentioned in these pages that men and women find sufficient time for card playing in which valuable days are spent in fostering a serious evil,—an evil in the sight of God, and with which he is greatly displeased. It is evil for one reason because young people who indulge in it will likely be led to places where card playing culminates,—in the saloon and gambling hall. We find time for what we love and are interested in, which is an explanation of the whole matter, and so when people do not attend religious services we may confidently conclude they are not interested.

The remedy, then, is to become interested. It is a duty to become interested. Why? Because it is a commandment of God. The saints anciently on this continent were commanded: "Pray in your families unto the Father, always in my name, that your wives and your children may be blessed. And behold, ye shall meet together oft, and ye shall not forbid any man from coming unto you when ye shall meet together, but suffer them that they may come unto you, and forbid them not * * and whosoever breaketh this commandment, (to meet together oft) suffereth himself to be led into temptation."

It is further commanded to the saints in our day: "It is expedient that the Church meet together often to partake of bread and wine in remembrance of the Lord Jesus." (Doctrine and Covenants 20 : 75.)

It is a pleasure, too, to become interested, for experience teaches that no joy can equal that which comes from a possession of the Spirit of the Lord. This can not be retained outside of frequent association with the saints in their places of worship. In fact it is plainly stated in the quotation from the Book of Mormon, that they who fail to [meet together often suffer themselves "to be led into temptation."

Some assign as a reason for not being interested in meetings that what is said and done is not attractive. It does not appeal to them. The unprepared sermon is dry, and the music is not always the best. If, however, we were to analyze this reason, the fault could be traced to the uninterested person himself, who has perhaps had the spirit of worship swallowed up in the spirit of pleasure which has tempted him. Again, he may have come to meeting with the sole idea of being entertained, so completely has he been led into temptation by that spirit. But a person who goes with the spirit of worship in his heart, and a desire to render true devotion to God, entertains himself, and in so doing, aids the spirit of the worshiping assembly, and finds abundant and surpassing happiness in his own soul. In meeting as in life, the secret of true happiness is to impart comfort and joy to others.

A serious time will come in every life. There is a parting of the ways. What you indulge in will lead you up or down. I

have no hesitancy in declaring in the name of the Lord that the spirit which leads you to complain that you are bored in attending the worshiping assemblies of the Saints has led or will lead you astray; and, on the other hand, that the young people who cultivate the true spirit of worship, and find happiness and pleasure in the associations of the Saints, and who care enough for God and religion to support the Church and attend the meetings, are the people whose moral and spiritual influence will control public sentiment and govern the state and nation. In any conflict with indifference and the spirit of worldly pleasure, moral influence and religious earnestness will always conquer and rule.

JOSEPH F. SMITH.

NOTES.

If you ever expect to amount to anything in the world, you should resist an inclination to loll or lounge around as you would a temptation to any other evil tendency. You can never make the most of yourself, if you succumb to the lounging habit. It is so insidious that, almost before you are aware of it, it will sap your ambition and lessen your chances of success. Compel yourself to get up, to brace up, and to keep up to your proper standard whether you feel to like it or not.—*O. S. Marden.*

Ten thousand selfish things will man regret—a thousand evil thoughts will cause shame to mantle the cheek; but the thing that abides, and lends hope forever, is the hour of faithfulness, when the soul is true. Supremacy does not come by doing great things. The great ones of earth, whom we remember, climbed to place by their great fidelity to little things. Are you an artist, and do you wish to have your canvas hung in the metropolitan museum? Young Raphael saw the bounty of God's beauty in the face of a poor flower girl and her babe, as he stood on the corner of the street. In that hour he tore a board from a fence, went into a wagon maker's shop and begged a few colors, and on a rough board, with a rude brush, he turned the poor flower girl into a madonna, and the babe into a divine child. With a handful of wet clay, young Michael Angelo proved his ability to carve the tombs of the de Medici family. An inferior thing, handled in a superior way, proves the true artist. And it is the common, homely duties of life, handled by an obedient spirit, that creates a beautiful character.—*Newell Dwight Hillis.*

IN LIGHTER MOOD.

"Tommy! stop that noise, and come here to me," said Mrs. Phamley, "Do you know whose day this is?"

"Yes, ma'am," replied Tommy, promptly.

"Whose is it?"

"Bridget's. Mary Ann was out last Sunday."—*Philadelphia Press*.

She stuttered. He stood in the doorway, hat in hand, and the stuttering young lady was inviting him to call again. "Come around S-s-s-s," she said, trying to say Sunday, but the sentence was never finished. The dog thought she meant "sic 'em," and he did.—*Kansas City Independent*.

Mrs. Long (who recommended a servant)—"Yes, she was an excellent girl in every way, except she would imitate me in dress, and things like that."

Miss Short—"Oh, yes; I noticed she began doing it when she came to me; but she's given it up now."

Mrs. Long—"I'm glad to hear it. I expect she saw she was making herself ridiculous."—*Punch*.

The following story is credited to a New Orleans lawyer, who was asked to address the boys of a business school. He commenced:

"My young friends, as I approached the entrance to this room I noticed on the panel of the door a word appropriate to an institution of this kind. It expresses the one thing most useful to the average man when he steps into the arena of life. It was—"

"Pull," shouted the boys, in a roar of laughter, and the lawyer felt that he had taken his text from the wrong side of the door.

When Boston school teachers come to Utah they are not infrequently annoyed by the use of "rock" for "stone," and fruit "bottles" for fruit "jars," and many other provincialisms. One nice school miss in Salt Lake not long ago saw one of her little boys "throwing rocks" at a neighbor's chickens. She stopped and chided him gently: "Vernon, Vernon," she said, "do not cast stones at the chickens." No heed was paid to the injunction, and it was repeated, whereupon young Vernon looked up in disgust and said: "I ain't castin' stones—I'm a lammin' rocks."

OUR WORK.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE OF PRESIDING OFFICERS.

At a meeting of the General Board, which was held on Wednesday evening, September 9, a resolution was introduced to which we call the attention of every stake superintendent of our Improvement Associations.

In the past, much annoyance has been occasioned in the office by a failure on the part of superintendents of stakes who have had occasion to leave their posts, in reporting to the office. Important letters, which have been sent from the General Board, and which needed action, have been left to lie unattended for weeks, at the address of the superintendent. Through a business call, or through some other necessity, the superintendents have left their posts of duty, and have gone off, perhaps to other states, or to other fields of labor, without notifying the office, or without appointing a substitute to act in their stead and to attend to their mail in their absence. The result has been, that very important matters have failed to receive consideration, and especially has this been the case in some of the convention matters this fall, no preparations having been made in some of the stakes because the superintendent has been absent, and his counselors have not felt that it was their duty to lead out and take charge of the affairs of the superintendent. The following resolution, which was adopted by the Board, will explain how the superintendents are expected to act in cases of this kind in the future:

"Resolved, that the General Secretary notify all the stake superintendents of the Y. M. M. I. A. that hereafter, whenever, through necessity, they are compelled to leave their posts of duty, that they appoint one of their counselors to act in their stead until their return to such post, and that they notify the General Secretary to that effect, giving the name and the address of the officer who is to so act in their absence."

The resolution was unanimously passed, and it was further suggested that counselors be requested to take charge and act, when so notified of the

absence of the superintendent, as if they themselves were at the head of the M. I. A. affairs of their stake. This will avoid all the trouble we have experienced in this regard in the past, and will enable us to continue the work notwithstanding the absence of any officer.

A rule of this kind would also be a splendid thing for the stake officers to adopt, that their ward presidents may also act in a similar manner, so that the trouble, which is not uncommon in the wards, of having the president away, shall not hinder the progress and advancement of the Mutual Improvement cause in any ward, but that there shall always be some person, who is responsible and whose address is known to the general officers, who can carry on the work.

IS YOUR ASSOCIATION GRADED ?

If not, urge the adoption of grading. It will improve your attendance, and give you new life. Why? Because it offers opportunity for all classes of young men to participate in exercises with those of their own age and ability. While about seventeen years has been mentioned as the age at which young men should go into the senior class, it cannot be decided upon the basis of age alone, but the boys should be assigned to the grade to which their mental abilities most adapt them. After the first division is made, the teacher must carefully weed out those from the junior class who ought to be in the senior, and vice versa. The Board has decided to make the rule strict, that no boys under fourteen years of age shall be admitted to the Mutual Improvement Associations, and their attendance at the meetings is to be discouraged.

Between the ages of fifteen and eighteen is the time when the most lasting religious impressions can be made upon the minds of the youth; in other words, it is the age of conversion, and no effort should be spared to influence the young men between these ages to become active in the gospel.

START RIGHT.

The season's work is now about to begin, and all the M. I. A. officers should be in readiness to do their duty in all respects. Too much cannot be said on the importance of making a good start. A bright, lively commencement means enthusiastic work all through the season, while

sleepy, uninteresting beginnings will drive many away who would otherwise become interested and good workers. The stake boards should have everything well prepared and in hand, and should have a representative at all the opening meetings in the wards.

They should send a report to each ward showing the general condition of the work in the stake, so that each ward may know what are the weak spots, and go to work accordingly. One of the stake superintendency should be given charge of each of the leading departments, such as the ERA, fund, missionaries, and Manual; and it should be their particular business to look after these things; but the superintendent should not feel that he is therefore released from his responsibility for all these departments, but he must exercise general supervision.

The ward officers should have made ready for work some weeks before the first meeting of the association. They should hold officers' meetings and plan the coming season's work. They should examine the roll and urge the attendance of those who have previously been dilatory and indifferent, making special effort to get them to the first meeting. It would be well to compare the condition of the association, as shown by the last report, with that of a year ago, and see wherein the association has fallen down, or made progress.

Use special effort to make the first meeting attractive. This is very important. Newcomers may be made permanent members by an attractive and pleasant meeting, while they may be driven away disgusted if the first meeting they attend is dull and uninteresting. Select, therefore, your best speakers for the first program.

Invite the bishopric and other ward officers to all your preliminary and other meetings. Be informed, so that you can answer all questions about your association.

EIGHTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE M. I. A.

MONDAY, 10 A.M., JUNE 1, 1903.

Sang the hymn, "Do what is right," prayer by Superintendent C. L. Haight, of the Cassia stake. Sang, "How firm a foundation, ye Saints of the Lord."

The secretary read the financial report for the year ending May 31, 1903, which had been duly audited and signed by the auditing committee. On motion the report was approved and filed.

MANUALS FOR 1903-4.

Elder B. H. Roberts then addressed the meeting on the subject of

the Manual for 1903-4. He said: "The subject will be the Book of Mormon, and the Manuals for 1903-4 and 1904-5 will treat on this subject. We have been gradually building up a course of study in 'Mormon' theology and 'Mormon' organization and government. We have had number one, a Manual on the 'Life of Jesus;' number two, on 'The Apostolic Age;' numbers three and four, 'Dispensation of the Fulness of Times;' numbers five and six, 'Principles of the Gospel.' We shall now publish two on the Book of Mormon, and one on modern revelation (Doctrine and Covenants); this leaves untreated the great period of the apostasy, which it is expected will be covered by a Manual on that subject, to succeed the one on modern revelation. This will make a ten years' course, an academic course, and one which we can use again, and will be the permanent course of study for the Mutual Improvement Associations. We believe it can be used also with advantage by quorums of the priesthood, and the Church schools and colleges. The text matter of the two Manuals on the Book of Mormon is really the second volume of the 'New Witness for God,' by the speaker, the first volume being Joseph Smith as a witness for God, this one being the Book of Mormon as a witness for God. This work has never yet been published, and has been purchased by the Church, the General Board of Y. M. M. I. A. paying for the use of it in the ensuing two Manuals.

"It is divided into four parts; first, the Book of Mormon as a witness for God and the Bible; second, discovery of the Book of Mormon, its translation, lands and history, and travels of its peoples; third, internal and external evidences of the truth of the Book of Mormon; fourth, objections considered.

"The first two parts will be, perhaps, the least interesting to our students, yet they must be considered first. The foundation must be laid. I desire to forestall any criticism on the score of this being a hard Manual. It is absolutely necessary, at this stage of our work, that our boys should be called upon to dig deep and work hard. We have now a Junior Manual for the smaller boys, and the seniors must take up good, hard study. To those who are studious, the subject of the Book of Mormon as a witness for the Bible, and a discussion of what is called the higher criticism of the Bible, may appear dry and difficult, but our elders today are required to meet these very things in the world, and if they would be fully equipped for their work, and polished shafts in the hands of the Lord, they must give their minds to these studies, to prepare themselves for good work in the mission field. The Manual will be divided into lessons, with an analysis for each lesson, as usual, and copious references to other works; although the chief references, of course, will be to the text contained in the Manual itself. This anal-

ysis, however, will not be published throughout the text, but the whole number of lesson-analyses will be placed together at the beginning of the Manual with the preliminary programs, which will be prepared jointly by the Y. M. M. I. A. Manual Committee, and the Y. L. M. I. A. Guide Committee.

"The cost of this Manual will be very much greater than any previous Manual, but the price will be the same. The Manual will contain two maps, one of North America and one of South, showing the physical features of these countries. They are very fine relief maps, and will be a valuable aid in the study of the Book of Mormon, and greatly enhance the value of the Manual.

"The Junior Manual will be biographical, containing short biographical lessons on Bible and Book of Mormon characters."

At the close of Elder Roberts' discourse, a general discussion ensued on the question of changing the date of the issue of the first number of the ERA volume, it being suggested that the ERA volume and the Manual should be issued at the same time; but after consideration, the matter was referred to the General Board for their action.

The question was asked, Which shall be studied in associations which are always held jointly—the Young Ladies' course of study, or the Young Men's? And this matter was also referred to the General Board.

Elder W. C. Clive rendered, in his inimitable style, two beautiful violin solos, accompanied on the piano by Prof. J. A. Anderson.

CLASSWORK.

Elder Douglas M. Todd addressed the meeting on the subject of classwork. He said that there appeared to be not quite enough enthusiasm on the part of the class leaders—not quite enough heart-power thrown into their work. Officers and class leaders should be well posted on their work; but above all, they should develop a love for and interest in the subject. Without this interest, no matter how well versed they were, they could not create the necessary interest in their students. Elder Brimhall has well said, "It is not what we learn, but what we love, that is of importance." If we do not love our work, our study will be only fragmentary.

Class leaders should not give too much attention to the best students, the negligent and indifferent student is the one which needs the greatest attention, and an effort should be made to call into active work the backward ones. Teachers should not do too much themselves. Their effort should be to encourage the boys to express their ideas. We are

not hunting after the very best, but to encourage all to express their thoughts. Students should be encouraged to ask good questions. The speaker urged the greater necessity of class leaders keeping in view the whole subject, and continually referring to that which had already been gone over, so as to keep up the relation between one lesson and another.

As a means of success, the teacher was asked to thoroughly prepare himself at home before coming to his class. The teacher was admonished that he should never "nag" the students. He should give special encouragement to those who have done good work, but should not find fault with the student in the class who had failed.

Elder Edward H. Anderson said that every teacher should keep in mind three points; namely, aim, illustration or development, and application; or, in other words, what are we studying for? how shall we study it? and what good will the lessons do us?

Brother Williams, of South Davis stake, urged that class leaders should be selected early in the season, all such selections should be made not later than the first meeting.

The doxology was sung, and the benediction pronounced by J. E. Heppler, Superintendent of Sevier stake.

2 P. M.

Singing, "O ye mountains high." Prayer by President William H. Smart, of Wasatch stake. Singing, "Guide us, O thou great Jehovah."

SUMMER WORK.

Elder Bryant S. Hinckley spoke on the subject of summer suggestions. He urged as absolutely necessary for keeping up the interest during the summer vacation, monthly conjoint meetings, and the quarterly conjoint meetings held in connection with the stake conferences. In the preparation of the programs for these meetings, the Young Men's officers must remember to pay due deference to the sisters, and combine with them in all the conjoint work.

He also called attention to the suggestion of Brother Edward H. Anderson, that every member of the association ought to take up some good book for summer reading, and further urged that officers' meetings should be held occasionally, so that the officers might keep themselves in touch with one another and with the work, both that which was to be done during the summer season, and the preparation for the coming winter.

MISSIONARY LABOR.

Elder J. Golden Kimball said upon the subject of missionary meth-

ods, that the missionary committee had not yet reached any conclusion or made any recommendations as to the manner of missionary work for the coming season, and he asked that the officers present express themselves as to what they considered the best method of missionary work. The brethren very generally participated in the discussion which followed, and many suggestions were made, all of which were referred to the missionary committee.

Elder Mathonihah Thomas explained the method which had been adopted in the Salt Lake stake during the past winter.

The following resolution, offered by Elder Rudger Clawson, was unanimously adopted: "That the general missionary work be suspended, and we bend our efforts and energies to the local missionary work, and that the local missionaries be called sufficiently early to be present at the fall conventions, and there receive their instructions; and that a committee from the General Board be appointed to take charge of this work."

DIGEST OF INSTRUCTIONS.

Elder Edward H. Anderson referred to the matter of "Published Instructions." He said that the general office was continually receiving questions in relation to points which had been time and again decided, and these decisions published in the IMPROVEMENT ERA. He said that every association should have a complete set of the IMPROVEMENT ERA for reference, and urged that the officers should post themselves on all the instructions which had been published from time to time.

On motion of Elder Nephi L. Morris, the General Board was authorized to prepare and publish a handbook of instructions for Mutual Improvement Association workers. .

REPORTS OF CONFERENCES.

Elder Nephi L. Morris said he desired to call particular attention to the fact that it had been decided by the General Board of the Young Men's and Young Ladies' Associations that the preliminary programs to be prepared by the Young Ladies' Committee on Guide and the Young Men's Committee on Manual, should be rendered conjointly wherever the associations met on the same evening and at the same place. That it had been decided that a conjoint session at the fall conventions should be held if it were found necessary, and that the meeting should be held in the evening. He stated that the General Board would make it a point to have a representative at each one of the stake conventions held in the fall, and that so far as possible they would also visit the M. I. A. conferences, but that it was frequently found impossible to send a representa-

tive to all of the M.I.A. conferences, and therefore, on his motion, it was unanimously decided that the secretary should provide a blank report to be sent to each stake superintendent, on which, report shall be made to the General Board in case no representative of that Board should be present at the M. I. A. conference.

Elder Rudger Clawson suggested that at the quarterly conjoint meeting, the roll of the wards should be called, in order that it might be shown what wards were represented by their presidents. He urged that suitable programs should be prepared for these meetings, and that the length of the meetings should be limited to say one hour and a half; that speakers placed on the program should be limited to a certain time, and required to keep within that limit.

Superintendent Jos. W. Smith, of Snowflake stake, asked, in behalf of the Arizona and Mexico stakes, that the appointments for the fall conventions be made for those places in September.

President Joseph F. Smith said: I think our meetings have been extraordinarily interesting—they certainly have to me. I have enjoyed all I have heard. The discussions will result in good, and we will profit by them. It is good to get together from time to time, and I hope that our conferences will be more and more interesting to us. And now God bless you, and may his Spirit impress upon your minds the instructions that have been given and the lessons presented.

Adjourned for one year.

Benediction by President John R. Winder.

EVENTS OF THE MONTH.

BY THOMAS HULL, GENERAL SECRETARY OF Y. M. M. I. A.

LOCAL.—*August 9*—Philip Pugsley, age eighty-two, was buried from the Twenty-second ward meeting house. He was one of the pioneers of Utah.....The cornerstone for a new synagogue, for the congregation Montefiore, was laid with appropriate ceremonies, President Joseph F. Smith being one of the speakers.....10—Aurora Hodge pleads not guilty to the murder of peddler Ryan.....The report of the State Board of Equalization shows railroad, telegraph and telephone assessments in Utah to be \$25,417,971.....11—The 11th annual camp-fire of the Utah County Blackhawk Indian War Veterans, commenced near Utah Lake.....14—The 33d session of the Utah Methodist Mission convened in Salt Lake.....15—The Supreme Court of Utah, in the case of Lewis vs. Alpine district trustees, decided that schoolhouses may not be used for dances.....16—The funeral services over the remains of Thomas C. Griggs, the musician and Sunday school worker, were held in the Assembly Hall, Salt Lake. He died in Teton Basin, on the 12th inst., and was born in Dover, Kent, England, June 19, 1845.....Malissa D. Clinton, a pioneer of 1848, a sister of Erastus Snow, and one of the State's first school teachers, died in Salt Lake City.....17—A company of citizens have petitioned the Salt Lake City Council for a franchise, it being purposed to run an electric railway line through Salt Lake, Davis, Weber and Utah Counties.....The heat continues very severe, the mercury reaching ninety-eight degrees, the highest of the year.....18—Plans of the new O. S. L. and San Pedro railways are submitted.....The prize irrigation ode, won by Mrs. Gilbert McClurg, of Colorado, is made public.....19—The militia of Utah are now settled at Camp Timpanogos, near Utah Lake, and are governed on a strictly military basis.....20—J. Wash. Young was granted a fifty year franchise for setting electric poles for lighting purposes throughout Salt Lake County.....Surveying parties for the Uintah Indian reservation are leaving.....22—Edwin M. Peck, a survivor of the Mormon Battalion, born July 24, 1828, in Vermont, a resident of Provo, died in Goshen.....24—Richard E. Johnson, of Monroe, age twenty-nine years, died in Hot Springs, Arkansas, in the mission field.....25—The new Home Telephone Company is rapidly pushing work on their new underground lines, and will begin with over

twelve thousand 'phones.....26—Typhoid fever is epidemic in Salt Lake, and the Health Board cannot place the cause. There have been fifty-seven cases so far this month.....27—Silver touches the highest price in two years, fifty-six cents.....President Joseph F. Smith and party, including Senator Reed Smoot, left for a trip through Canada and the north.....29—Gen. Wm. H. Penrose, age seventy-two, a distinguished soldier and former commander at Fort Douglas, died in Salt Lake City.....30—The Salt Lake Stake Sunday school conference was held in the Tabernacle.....31—Rev. Richard Wake is placed at the head of a "gentile" bureau of information, which has just been started in Salt Lake.....There were seventy-six cases of typhoid in Salt Lake, in August.

September 1—The City Council, of Salt Lake, return from a trip to the north-west.....2—Ogden is making great preparations for the Irrigation Congress.....H. D. Niles, M. D., is made president, and the fifth yearly session of the R. M. Interstate Medical Association closes in Salt Lake.....3—Work is progressing favorably on the fine roadbed of the Rio Grande now being constructed between Salt Lake and Ogden.....4—A condensed milk factory, costing sixty thousand dollars, capacity, sixty-five thousand pounds of milk per day, is well under way in Richmond, Cache County.....5—Annie Hansen, age seventy-eight, a resident of West Jordan since 1866, died.....Prof. J. J. McClellan received fifty dollars, the prize for music to the irrigation ode.....6—A monument was dedicated to the memory of James R. Hay, in the City cemetery, Salt Lake, the orator being Dr. Jas. E. Talmage.....The new All Hallows building is dedicated, Bishop Scanlan presiding.....7—It is unofficially announced that A. W. McCune's interests in the street car lines of Salt Lake, are about to pass under the control of the Utah Light and Power Company.....Organized labor made a creditable demonstration in Labor Day parades, in all the leading cities, and the resorts are crowded with pleasure seekers.....8—The O. S. L. asks the City Council for a franchise for building a new million-dollar passenger station for Salt Lake.....10—The sugar factory at Lehi begins operations.....Plans for a new million-dollar passenger station, in Salt Lake, are discussed by Rio Grande Railway officials.

DOMESTIC.—*August 8*—Lieut. General Samuel B. M. Young, assumes command of the army, having been designated on the 5th to succeed General Miles.....10—The government crop report estimates the yield of winter wheat at four hundred and ten million bush-

els.....15—Officials in Indian Territory are charged with corruption in leasing of lands to companies of which they are members..... Joseph Pulitzer gives two million dollars to establish a school of journalism in connection with Columbia University.....17—Judge Davis, of the U. S. Circuit Court, St. Louis, upholds the Western Union black lists, and the right to discharge employees for belonging to a labor union.....19—Secretary Root leaves for London, to preside over the Alaskan Boundary Commission.....20—The Grand Army of the Republic, at its encampment at San Francisco, elects John C. Black Commander-in-chief.....21—The G. A. R. encampment passes resolution eulogizing General Miles.....22—The first annual report on the work of irrigating the arid lands was made public by the Geological Survey.....The *Reliance* wins first race for America's cup, by seven minutes and three seconds, outsailing *Shamrock III*.....The new cruiser *Philadelphia* is launched at Philadelphia.....25—The *Reliance* wins the second race by one minute, nineteen seconds.....Secretary Hitchcock and Attorney-General Knox order investigations into the Indian Land schemes.....Tom. L. Johnson is nominated for Governor by the Ohio Democratic State Convention.....27—Wm. C. Maglessen, U. S. Vice-Consul at Beirut, Assyria, is reported assassinated, and the President orders the European Squadron to Beirut.....29—General Robert Shaw Oliver assumes his duties as Assistant Secretary of War.....31—Chekib Bey, the Turkish Minister, confers with Secretary Hay about the situation in Turkey.

September 2—Attorney General Knox starts an investigation into the alleged land abuses by officers in Indian Territory.....3—The *Reliance* wins her third victory over *Shamrock III*, ending the races, and the cup remains in America.....4—The *Brooklyn* and *San Francisco* arrive at Beirut.....5—Three years leave of absence is granted to Commander Robert E. Peary, U. S. N., to make another attempt to reach the North Pole.

FOREIGN.—*August 8*—The Russian Consul at Monastir is murdered by a Turkish soldier.....9—Pius X. is crowned Pope at St. Peter's in the presence of seventy thousand people.....10—The Macedonian Committee at Belgrade issued a statement to the Powers that a general rising against Turkey has been determined upon.....A hurricane visits Martinique, kills eighty-one persons and renders five thousand homeless.....Two trains take fire in a Paris tunnel, causing over one hundred passengers to die from asphyxiation.....11—A hurricane sweeps over Jamaica, killing fifty people and de-

stroying ten million dollars' worth of property.....12—
 Tolstoi's pamphlet, "Thou Shalt not Kill," is suppressed as treasonable
 by a German provincial court at Leipsic.....13—The Irish Land
 Bill is passed by both houses of Parliament.....The Chilean
 Ministry and the Servian Cabinet resign.....15—Russia orders
 war ships from the Black Sea to Turkish waters to enforce satisfaction
 for the murder of her consul at Monastir.....17—Turkey
 calls out fifty-two thousand reserves.....18—One thousand in-
 surgents repel an attack of three thousand Turks near Monastir.....
 The Irrigation Commission of India proposes to expend one hundred and
 fifty million dollars on protective works.....19—A Russian
 squadron arrives in Turkish waters.....The Powers discuss a
 joint naval demonstration.....Twenty natives in China stone
 Russian troops and an uprising is feared.....Turkey begs Russia
 to withdraw her fleet, and agrees to accede to Russian demands.....
 21—Stockholders of the Cunard Steamship Company ratify an agree-
 ment with the British government that no foreigner can become a stock-
 holder or officer of the company.....22—Lord Salisbury,
 ex-Premier of England, dies at London.....The Humbert
 family of Paris are convicted of swindling by means of the Crawford
 millions hoax.....23—The Russian squadron is ordered back to
 Sebastapol, the Sultan having complied with all the Russian demands.
24—The British Government, through the Zionist Con-
 gress, offers a colony in East Africa for settlement by the Jews.....
25—Twelve Bulgarian villages in Monastir and three near Adrian-
 ople are burned. The inhabitants are massacred by Turks.....
 Von Plehve, the Russian Minister, declared to the Zionist Congress at
 Basle that the Zionist movement can only be encouraged by the Russian
 Government on the condition that the Jews were taken out of Russia.
26—Turkey calls out all her European reserves to suppress
 the Macedonian revolt.....Vesuvius erupts a thousand feet
 below the central crater.....The Zionist Congress appoints a
 committee to investigate the colony for Jews, offered by England.....
 28—The reported assassination of Vice-Consul Maglesson at Beirut
 turns out to be untrue, but the U. S. European squadron is ordered to
 continue on its way to Beirut.....29—M. Pleske is made Rus-
 sian Minister of Finance, and M. de Witte is promoted to be President
 of Committee of Ministers.....30—The Alaskan Boundary Com-
 mission for the United States arrives in London.....The spirit
 of revolution is growing stronger in Panama on account of the rejection
 of the canal treaty by the Colombian Congress.....31—Turkish
 atrocities in Macedonia continue.....Lord Salisbury is buried at
 Hatfield, England.

September 1—The court which is to decide Venezuela claims meets
 at the Hague.....Von Plehve issues orders to prevent Zionist
 meetings in Russia, and collect Zionist funds, and to watch all schools
 closely where Hebrew is taught.....3—King Edward leaves
 Vienna for England.....4—A plot to kill all the conspirators
 in the murder of King Alexander is discovered, and arrests follow.....
 6—Great excitement prevails in Belgrade, Servia, and there are rumors
 of cabinet changes.

A Good Book is like a good name—better than riches.

IMPROVEMENT ERA

ORGAN OF

YOUNG MEN'S MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT
ASSOCIATIONS.

VOLUME SIX.

PUBLISHED BY THE GENERAL BOARD.

"What you young people want, is a magazine that will make a book to be bound and kept, with something in it worth keeping."—*President John Taylor.*

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1902-3.

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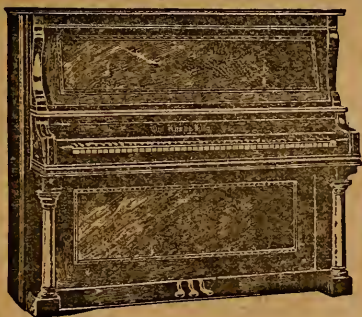
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